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LAZARILLO OF TORMES
HIS LIFE
FORTUNES
MISADVENTURES

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HIS LIFE
FORTUNES
MISADVENTURES

TRANSLATED BY
MARIANO J. LORENTE

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TO

KENNETH
RODERICK
MALCOLM

M. J. L.

THE PICARESQUE NOVEL

THERE is, in the history of Spanish literature, a period known as “El Siglo de Oro,” or “The Golden Century,” though in reality it spans considerably more than one hundred years.

This “Siglo de Oro,” during which were written many of the masterpieces of Spanish literature, is almost coincident with what the Italians call “L’Eta dell’Oro,” in reference to their arts. But it were equally proper to apply the adjective “golden” to that period, as regards the whole of the then civilized world, rather than to limit the appellation to Spanish literature and Italian arts, for during that time — and after an interval of sixteen bleak centuries — there seemed to spring up everywhere a host of remarkable men.

Seldom have the nations of the earth produced so many wonderful characters at the same time and displayed such titanic energy as during that golden period. The world was then a stage upon which acted their appointed rôles, saints, popes, kings, statesmen, soldiers, navigators, explorers, sculptors, painters, writers, the like of which have never since

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been matched. A fever seemed to seize mankind. Learning received a tremendous impetus; universities were founded in every country; scholars busied themselves bringing to light the wisdom of the ancients that lay buried under the dust of centuries of ignorance and barbarism; adventurous spirits went out to find the real shape of the earth and to conquer unknown lands; crafty statesmen plotted and schemed to make and undo nations with the help of unconquerable generals; religious reformers, both outside and within the Catholic Church, sought to shape the conscience of mankind, and in so doing urged the already active humanity on to newer accomplishments; and in this turmoil of activity, great geniuses devoted themselves to the creation of masterpieces in all the branches of art.

Of all the nations that took an active part in this renaissance, Spain, without a doubt, played the most glorious rôle. As it would not be appropriate here to enumerate her wonderful deeds in all the spheres of human endeavor, I will confine myself to speaking of her main accomplishments in the world of letters, namely, the creation of the picaresque novel, a genre which completely revolutionized literature and from which our modern novel has originated.

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The so-called "Siglo de Oro" begins with the accession of the Catholic kings to the thrones of Castile and Aragon. Under them, the Christian kingdoms of the Peninsula, which for centuries had remained separated by the greed, bloodthirstiness, jealousy and stupidity that afflict pagan and Christian kings alike, became finally united and, as a result of such union, Granada — the last Moorish stronghold — was conquered. Politically, then, the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella is of the greatest importance, especially when we remember that in their time America was discovered and thrown open to the energy, ambition, love of adventure and proselytizing propensities of the Spaniards.

But if their reign is of the utmost importance in the political field, it is even more so in the republic of letters, for it marks the beginning, as I have already stated, of the "Siglo de Oro" during which Spanish literature freed itself from foreign shackles and in turn speedily spread its influence over the literatures of other countries.

It is true that Spanish literature had already produced works of the highest value and of a decidedly national character, such as the anonymous "Poema del Cid," "El Libro del Buen Amor," by the genial

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Archpriest of Hita, and a host of popular “Romances” or ballads; still, the bulk of the literary output was anything but remarkable, and bore an unmistakable foreign stamp.

During the half century or so preceding the Catholic kings, especially under Don Juan II of Castile, the writing of poetry had become a courtly fad, a fashion, that set everybody a-singing and a-rhyming whether they had any aptitude for versifying or not. Castile became infested with Galician and Portuguese *trovadores* who slavishly followed the traditions of Provence — the original home of the troubadours — and their works, as well as those of the Castilian poetasters who followed their example, constitute a monotonous, dullish, conceited, artificial collection of nonsense, of which the “Cancionero de Baena” is perhaps the finest specimen. The example set by the king and the aristocracy of those Castilian days was so strong that even tailors and shoemakers neglected their trades to seize the lyre; the result was that the delicate flower of native poesy was effectively choked to death by the foreign weeds that throve so luxuriantly on the Castilian soil.

With the advent of the Catholic kings, things took a turn for the better. Spanish letters did not attain

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their independence suddenly; indeed, new foreign importations threatened for a time to keep them in ignominious subjection. But the time had come for native writers to assert themselves. The foreign elements first were adapted, until they assumed an aspect thoroughly in keeping with the times and the country, and they were finally eliminated from the body literary, giving way to an absolutely original literature which faithfully reflected the Castilian character. ✓

At the beginning of the "Golden Century," the novel may be said to have been nonexistent in Spain. As could be expected in a country which had been subjected to Moorish domination during seven long centuries, there were innumerable stories, Buddhist apologues, oriental tales with a good deal of Greek philosophy remodelled by Arabs and Jews, didactic stories built for the express purpose of being adorned with a moral, which were written with a view to the education of the readers. Again, there were the kingly chronicles, which, though purporting to be historical narratives, were highly imaginative in many instances and served to keep alive the patriotic fires by extolling the virtues and exploits of worthy warriors who might, as well as not, have existed. But all of them were disconnected narratives of action

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with hardly a plot and no attempt at characterization.

With the advent of the Catholic kings the first novels began to appear. Through Portugal — which has been more or less of a thorn in the side of Spain — came first of all the romances of chivalry, or knight-errantry, followed in a short time by amorous-sentimental novels.

The romances of chivalry came from the nebulous, mysterious nations of the north and originated in the Arthurian legends and the Chronicles of Turpin. They insinuated themselves from France into Portugal, whence poor Castile, but newly rid of Saracens, was invaded and conquered by King Arthur and his Round Table knights, Charlemagne and his peers, Merlin and his witches and warlocks. They created a great *furore* in Spain, and Garci Ordóñez's "Amadís de Gaula," which appeared in 1496 and is the first romance of chivalry printed in Spanish, was quickly followed by a host of paladins, each more recklessly valorous, more exquisitely apollonic, more bombastically eloquent, more amorously devoted to the lady of his desire, and beset by beasts and evil spirits more awesome, fiendish and cunning than any of their predecessors.

These romances followed very closely their foreign

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patterns. Their plots differed but little from each other, but as they became more and more popular, the successive authors intensified the awesomeness of the hair-raising adventures, increased the ampullousness of the hero's speeches, enhanced the beauteousness of the immaculate lady in a furious crescendo that was suddenly silenced forever by one of the few real knights-errant the world has ever known — the heroic soldier of Lepanto, the even more heroic captive of Algiers, the patient inmate of the Seville gaol, the immortal author of "Don Quixote," Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra.

But if the romances of chivalry remained foreign in inspiration, they became naturalized in conception and execution. The very first romance of their kind, "Amadís de Gaula," is, according to Menéndez y Pelayo, "the first modern novel, the first example of long narrative prose, conceived and executed as such." The isolated incidents of the northern legends are here welded together into a harmonious whole. And with a sequence of events that closely follow each other, there is some attempt at characterization. In fact, the knights-errant of the Spanish authors attain a considerable degree of realism, even in spite of the fabulous feats they perform. Not only that,

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but most of the romances of chivalry — and especially the “Amadís de Gaula” — are written in a polished, rhetorical prose that was original in those days and which rendered them immensely popular, not only in Spain but in most European countries, for they were translated as fast as issued from the press.

The religious revival then taking place in the Peninsula had a good deal to do with the extraordinary popularity of the romances of chivalry in Spain. The religious zeal of the Catholic queen was dexterously exploited by the clergy. The Inquisition became all-powerful and proceeded to do, in as short a time as possible and by means of torture and fire, what fourteen centuries of priestly preachings had failed to accomplish, namely, to force the people to conform to the teachings of the Catholic Church in the strictest fashion.

The Inquisition failed in its purpose, *ça va sans dire*, but, for the time being, it succeeded in rousing the people to a riot of religious frenzy which resulted in a goodly crop of convents and monasteries, together with several saints of the first magnitude. Renunciation, self-denial, self-sacrifice filled the air, and in that saintly atmosphere it was natural that the

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romances of chivalry should thrive like a weed in a tropical garden, for the romances of chivalry exemplified the very teachings of the Catholic Church. The knights-errant were devoted to an ideal and they stuck to it with reckless disregard of their persons; they idolized the lady of their desire and nothing on earth, or in the realms of fantasy, could render them unfaithful to their love.

Given the proper ideal and the proper lady, the knight-errant becomes the perfect Catholic. This theory is far from being a mere sacrilegious fancy. The fact that the bigot Charles V and the hysterical Saint Theresa, as well as many pious souls of lesser degree, indulged in the reading of romances of chivalry goes a long way to prove that such books were not contrary to Catholic ideas, but what confirms the theory is that Hieronymo de Sempere — a Valencian author — wrote a book, published in Valencia and Antwerp, in 1554, entitled “*Caballería Celestial de la Rosa Fragante*,” where he introduces Christ as a knight-errant, with the title of “Knight of the Lions”! In the same book, the Apostles appear as the “Knights of the Round Table,” John the Baptist becomes the “Knight of the Desert” and Satan the “Knight of the Serpent”!

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Fitzmaurice-Kelly deals harshly with Sempere and calls him a "blasphemous buffoon." Sempere was nothing of the kind! Fitzmaurice-Kelly measures him by the standards Puritans, Presbyterians and Northern Catholics have set up for themselves. Theirs is still the sour-faced, vitriol-tempered Biblical god of the Jews who insists on getting his pound of flesh. The god of the Spaniards — and other Southern Catholics as well — is vastly different from the Hebraic-Protestant-Northern Catholic conception. He is a benign old man of white locks and flowing beard, with a twinkle in his eye and, at times, even a wink at the foibles of his imperfect children. He and his corps of holy assistants are extremely approachable and always ready to help mortals in trouble.

If a devout Spanish Catholic loses his collar button, if he has the toothache, or if more serious misfortunes beset him, he does not look upon his troubles as a punishment from a jealous and wrathful god for some trespass upon his touchy dignity. On the contrary, he blames the devil right away, and forthwith makes application to the proper divine quarter and obtains relief . . . for a consideration, for, after all, even the god of the Spaniards is of Jewish origin.

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His collar button may cost him a paternoster; the toothache may disappear after a couple of credos; a few Masses may rescue some dear relative from death or save a soul from purgatory. The Northern Christian dares not mention his god except on formal occasions, but the names of God, Jesus, the Virgin Mary and the Saints are constantly upon the Spaniard's lips — and this with no blasphemous intention. He simply looks upon the divinities as members of his own family whom he wishes to share his emotions. Familiarity may breed contempt, but in the case of the Spaniard, his familiarity with the Deity results in a loss of fear and a consequent daring for taking liberties which, though they really are expressions of love, appear to Northern Christians as execrable instances of blasphemy.

Contemporaneously with the romances of chivalry, there flourished in Spain another genre of the novel closely allied to them and which gave rise to extravagances such as Sempere was guilty of. This was the amorous-sentimental novel, a species that did not reach the same development as the romances of chivalry, though their influence on Spanish letters was more powerful.

The best example of such novels is “La Cárcel de

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Amor," by Diego Fernández de San Pedro, a supposed Jew who was in the service of Don Pedro Girón, a high officer of the military order of Calatrava. "La Cárcel de Amor," published in 1492, is a psychological novel reminiscent of Dante's "La Vita Nuova" and Boccaccio's "Fiammeta," with a touch of melancholy knight-errantry that gives it a marked individuality. It is written in a sweet harmonious prose noticeable in writers of the sixteenth century, even in many passages from Cervantes, though in the latter it is not so laborious and artificial.

"La Cárcel de Amor" has been called the "Werther's Leiden" of that period. It resembles Goethe's work in the form — for it is written chiefly as letters — in the heart-rending sadness that pervades it, in the frantic and unfortunate passion it unfolds, and in the tragic death of the leading character, Leriano, who commits suicide. The religious atmosphere so turned Leriano's head, and his passion was so extravagant, that he adored the lady of his heart as if she had been God. He ventured to air his theological views and ran foul of the Inquisition. However, in spite of the inquisitorial interdict against the book, or perhaps because of it, "La Cárcel de

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Amor” became so popular that over twenty-five Spanish editions of it were published in less than a century, and as many more in French, Italian and English.

Both books of knight-errantry and the sentimental novels after the pattern of “*La Cárcel de Amor*,” though thoroughly Castilian in form, were absolutely foreign in spirit. The Spaniards of all times have been a fairly sensible people. Their imagination, as happened to Don Quixote, has taken flight sometimes, misguided, as was the Ingenious Knight of La Mancha, by some foreign fancy, but an innate common sense brings them immediately to the realities of life. And so it happened that, while those fantastic productions were at the height of their popularity, there came from the press at Burgos, in the year 1499, a book that stands like a beacon light in the annals of Spanish literature. Its original title was “*Comedia de Calisto y Melibea*,” which in the edition of 1502, at Seville, was changed to “*Tragi-comedia de Calisto y Melibea*,” but it is universally known as “*La Celestina*.” Its author is supposed to have been Fernando de Rojas.

“*La Celestina*,” in spite of its title and of its being divided into acts, is not a work for the theatre. To

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begin with, it is too long; the original consisted of sixteen acts, and five more were added to it in the Seville edition. Then, it is so free from the conventionalities of the theatre that it is impossible to place it on the boards as it was written. Rather than a play, it is a powerfully dramatic novel in dialogue form.

The plot of "La Celestina" is the eternal story of two ill-fated lovers. Calisto, a young nobleman, falls passionately in love with Melibea, a young lady of high station who, at first, turns a deaf ear to Calisto's entreaties. One of the young nobleman's servants advises him to consult an old woman, Celestina by name, who is well versed in love matters. Celestina's art and eloquence soften Melibea's heart. Calisto visits his lady and at the second interview obtains possession of her body. His third visit proves unlucky. Celestina's friends, angered by her death at the hands of Calisto's servants, who wanted their share of the reward given her by their master, come to wreak vengeance upon Calisto. The lover hears them arguing with his followers, who are waiting for him outside the garden wall. Calisto rushes away from Melibea, and as he is climbing down to the street, the scale breaks and he is killed. On

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learning his death, Melibea commits suicide. Celestina's assassins are publicly executed for their crime.

Though the addition of five acts in the second and subsequent editions detracts from the artistic value of the drama, through the introduction of unnecessary incidents that hamper the development of its action, still "La Celestina" is a masterpiece, especially if we consider the times when it was written. It is the precursor of both the modern drama and the modern novel. In it we find none of the fantastic beings and impossible adventures of the romances of chivalry, none of the extravagant passions and religiously perverted infatuations of works like "La Cárcel de Amor." Rojas deals with realities; his characters are made of flesh and blood and their passions are those the common ordinary clay fashioned by God is subject to. Calisto loves Melibea passionately, but he is no knight-errant. When his personal appearance and smooth talk fail to make an impression on charming Melibea, he does not seek hair-raising adventures. Like a sensible fellow, he makes judicious use of his money and hires some one else to save him a deal of trouble. And when the universal "Open Sesame" has finally gained him admittance to Melibea's

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chamber, he falls not upon his knees, nor does he content himself with kissing the fringe of her gown. No; he carries things to their natural conclusion. His untimely death prevents us from making an accurate estimate of his character, but judging by his actions in the play, he seems to have all the earmarks of a Don Juan.

Melibea, on her part, is a lovable woman with all the weaknesses of her sex. The moment she sees Calisto, her intuition warns her that he is her sweet enemy. Her feminine dignity is outraged at his audacity in addressing her without the formality of an introduction. However, her anger is more feigned than real, so that when the snake Celestina talks to her about the apple, the poor girl is only too willing to take a bite. And when Calisto visits her, the only resistance she offers to his fiery passion is feeble words about her maidenhood, her honor. Words, nothing but words, the worst fire-extinguishers in all the world!

Calisto and Melibea are very finely drawn by Rojas. The psychologies of the two lovers are so wonderfully traced that Calisto and Melibea are worthy of a place beside Shakespeare's most famous creations.

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Some critics advance the claim that Shakespeare derived his "Romeo and Juliet" from "La Celestina," as he must have been acquainted with an early English translation of it. Such is hardly the case. It is true that there are some points of resemblance between the two works, but the two dramas are vastly different. The quality of the love in Shakespeare's creatures is so idealistic and does so conform to the conventions of society that his play may be performed before a young ladies' seminary without flustering a single maiden's cheek. On the other hand, the love of Calisto and Melibea is more earthly, more human. The lovers of Verona defy the stupid, petty, un-Christian wishes of their respective relatives. It seems as if Shakespeare's chief concern had been to expose the cruelty of "man's inhumanity to man" by the sacrifice of two such lovable and unstained victims. The Spanish lovers defy their fate. They break the laws of the church and the conventions of society and do so knowingly and, apparently, without any excuse. Their doom is the just punishment for their trespass. The author says so repeatedly. He seems to impress the reader with the fact that "the wages of sin is death."

However, bearing in mind the times when "La

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Celestina ” was written and the powerful hold the Inquisition had then in Spain, we may very properly wonder whether Rojas wanted to write a moralizing tract or a realistic story which he had to disguise in such a way as to meet with the approval of the ecclesiastical censor. The latter theory is the more likely of the two, for the simple reason that the realism of “La Celestina ” is far too excessive for a moralizing tract. “La Celestina ” reeks with realism. Not alone are Calisto and Melibea faithfully drawn from life, but the secondary characters are equally vividly painted.

Calisto’s followers and Celestina’s friends are of the utmost importance in Spanish literature. They represent a class of people who had been thought unworthy of literary treatment until Rojas — tired of the foolish phantasmagoria of the novels then in vogue — perceived their artistic value, realizing that the creations of God are bound to be infinitely superior to the mere imaginings of man. This class of people — known in Spain by the name of *pícaros* — so caught the public fancy that very soon after “La Celestina ” had taken the literary world by storm, picaresque novels began to appear in rapid succession. They quickly crossed the Pyrenees and

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from France passed into England, leaving unmistakable traces in the literatures of those countries.

A picaresque novel is the real or fictitious autobiography of a *pícaro* who relates his adventures through life cynically, but in a humorous rather than in a sarcastic manner.

The *pícaro* is a young fellow of low extraction. His parents belong to the lowest strata of society. Heredity and environment tend to make a criminal out of him, but he is saved from utter degradation by his lack of ambition and by his wit. Instead of a vulgar criminal, he becomes a genial parasite. He is enough of a philosopher not to take life too seriously. His one aim in life is to have a moderately good time with a minimum of effort, and he likes to satisfy his physical wants without, however, carrying anything to excess.

Like all social parasites, the *pícaro* is somewhat of a psychologist. He studies his fellow-beings with a view to finding their soft spots and, whenever possible, proceeds to operate upon them after previous application of the anesthetic of his wit. For the *pícaro*, rather than appealing to the charitable feelings of his victims, prefers to ingratiate himself with them by an exhibition of his wit, and if perchance

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his victims become aware that they have been tricked, they are either disarmed by the very ingenuity with which they have been deceived, or are prevented from taking a just revenge by the witnesses of their discomfiture, who simply cannot help sympathizing with the *pícaro* because of the cleverness with which he has accomplished his purpose.

His parasitic propensities, together with his knowledge of the world, force the *pícaro* to put up a bold front and to use boastful language. We sometimes hear of a beggar who has managed to amass a fortune penny by penny, but, as a rule, the ragged wretch who pleads for alms in the name of the Lord fares much worse than the well groomed blackguard who separates the fool from his money by means of stories of fictitious wealth and recitals of valorous deeds. He likewise tries to dress as attractively as possible. Though the *pícaro* is a scoundrel, he seldom comes into a major conflict with the authorities. He never thinks of the morrow. He lives in the present, and whatever infractions of the law he is guilty of are committed for the sole purpose of relieving a momentary want. Therefore his offences are petty, and the minions of the law generally consider their duty sufficiently discharged when they have scared

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the *pícaro* away from the scene of his exploits.

His ready wit, his glib tongue, his agile imagination, his carefree existence, his good nature, and his adventurous spirit have helped to make the *pícaro* a favorite with the reading public the world over. He appeals to the sporting instinct of the reader by the good-humored fashion in which he meets his many misfortunes and the ingenious way in which he manages to pull out of numberless scrapes. The fact that he is constantly tricking somebody also makes the *pícaro* very attractive, for there is an innate tendency in man to laugh at the discomfiture of his fellow-beings. Besides, man is a rebellious spirit, and though religion and his own general convenience may have instilled into his conscience a fairly honest respect for the law, yet he cannot help admiring — more or less openly — whoever is bold enough to kick over the traces, and this the *pícaro* never fails to do. But what has insured the popularity of the *pícaro* is his humanness. The *pícaro* is a man; he is not an imaginary freak like the knight-errant. His very weaknesses and transgressions make him human. The readers found in him a fellow-being whom they knew perfectly well, for they had met him in everyday life, just as they

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were acquainted with all the other characters mentioned by the *pícaro* in his autobiography. They were carried away by the marvellous portraits of those familiar types.

The enormous success of the first picaresque novel, "Lazarillo de Tormes," caused succeeding authors to write picaresque novels, giving rise to a genre that has profoundly affected the literature of the whole world. So much so, that the modern novel may be directly traced to the picaresque novels. For though our novels may differ widely in subject, treatment and style, yet most authors endeavor to give a transcript from life; their characters are almost invariably drawn from nature and this is something that had never been attempted until the author of the first picaresque novel blazed the way for later generations of writers.

Because the *pícaro* — in so far as literature is concerned — was born in Spain, many authors, who ought to have known better, have taken him as a genuinely Spanish product, and some of them have been carried by their ignorance so far as to consider him a typical Spaniard. Nothing could be farther from the truth! The *pícaro* is a universal type. Babylon, Damascus, Alexandria, Athens, Rome must

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have had their *pícaros* just as London, Paris, New York, Berlin and Buenos Aires have their *pícaros* today. Given the requisite surroundings — a wealthy and populous country or town — the *pícaro* — who is a parasite — will not fail to show up. It is by no means a question of nationality; it is a question of human nature.

If the *pícaro* first appeared in Spanish literature, it may be partly due to the fact that such gentry were more plentiful in Spain, at that particular time, than elsewhere. The discovery of the New World had filled the pockets of many Spaniards with seemingly easy gold and the heads of most of them with dreams of wealth and grandeur. The stay-at-homes naturally took a dislike to their slow and painful ways of making a living, with never a chance to attain a fortune. They began to look upon work of any kind as a veritable curse, and endeavored to obtain a share of the booty — by fair means or foul — from the daring adventurers who had risked their hides beyond the ocean. The times could not be more favorable for a plentiful crop of *pícaros*. Still the *pícaro* was not a new member of the community, sprung up overnight. The *pícaro* has always been with us, but he needed a man of genius to discover him, and it was logical

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that the discoverer should have been a Spaniard for, at that time, Spain had more than her share of great men.

The foregoing remarks must not be construed to mean that the Spanish *pícaro* is exactly the same as the *pícaros* of other countries. No, there are *pícaros* and *pícaros*, and they differ from each other as much as a Spaniard differs from an Englishman or a Frenchman. But those differences are temperamental. What I wish to emphasize is that the *pícaro* is not peculiar to Spain.

The first picaresque novel, “La Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus Fortunas y Adversidades,” seems to have first seen the light in 1553, for Brunet mentioned an edition of that date made in Antwerp, but no one has ever seen a single copy of it. The earliest editions of this novel are those of Burgos, by Juan de Junta; Alcalá, by Salcedo; and Antwerp, by Nucio, all of which are dated 1554. The Alcalá edition, by Salcedo, says: “newly printed, corrected and newly enlarged in this second printing,” which seems to corroborate Brunet’s statement that there had been an earlier edition than those actually known.

The Antwerp edition of 1554 appears to be a copy of the Burgos edition of the same year — which is

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held by most critics as the *editio princeps* — but the Alcalá edition seems to have followed an earlier unknown edition. It differs from the Burgos edition chiefly in some six passages, most of which do not seem to fit at all in the story. In the following translation of the novel, I have followed the Burgos edition — as given by Julio Cejador — omitting the dubious passages from the Alcalá edition.

“Lazarillo de Tormes” — as the book is commonly called — was so well received, that an unknown scribbler published a second part in 1555, but the author of the second part was so far out of sympathy with the creator of Lazarillo, that he indulged in such nonsensical pranks as converting the hero into a tunny fish and making him roam the vasty deep in search of adventures!

Almost a century after the appearance of “Lazarillo de Tormes” — in 1620, to be precise — an instructor of Spanish in Paris published another second part. Juan de Luna — for such was the instructor’s name — acquitted himself remarkably well of his task, following the author of the original in language, method and style to such an extent that his second part has been classed as a “literary jewel.”

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Besides those second parts, there have been many imitations of "Lazarillo de Tormes," which only serve to show that the novel was as popular as it was hard to imitate, for most of them have no literary value at all. But though direct imitations of the famous little novel have proved failures, several Spanish authors — some of them recognized masters like Cervantes and Quevedo — have written picaresque novels of the highest merit. The most important are: "Guzmán de Alfarache," by Mateo Alemán; "El Gran Tacaño," by Francisco de Quevedo; "El Escudero Marcos de Obregón," by Vicente Espinel; "El Diablo Cojuelo," by Vélez de Guevara; "Estebanillo González," by Esteban González (?); "La Pícara Justina," by Pérez de León; "El Donado Hablador," by Alcalá Yáñez, and "Rinconete y Cortadillo," by Cervantes.

"Lazarillo de Tormes" was soon translated into most European languages. The first English translation was made by David Rowland and published in 1586, but "Lazarillo de Tormes" began to exert its influence on English literature much earlier than that, probably through some French or Italian translation.

Before the appearance of "Lazarillo de Tormes," the most important works of fiction in English were

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the Arthurian romances, Malory's "Morte d'Arthur" and adaptations from French and Italian stories, both in prose and verse. In addition to these, there had always existed a scrappy and disconnected sort of fiction consisting of anecdotes and short stories such as always spring up about a notable or notorious character. But it was not until eleven years after "Lazarillo de Tormes" had appeared that a book was published in London in which are related in chronological order — for the first time in English — the doings of a roguish character. This book, which became very popular, is known for short as "Skogging's Gests," and the nature of the anecdotes told and the semi-biographic arrangement of the subject matter make it bear a certain resemblance to "Lazarillo de Tormes."

However, the first English novel that may be said to have been derived from "Lazarillo de Tormes" is "Jack Wilton," written by William Nash and published in 1549. Jack Wilton is a real *pícaro*; he is not Spanish, though; he is English, but a *pícaro* nevertheless, and he bears out my contention that there are *pícaros* in every country and that the only differences between them are temperamental and "atmospheric."

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That Rowland's translation made "Lazarillo de Tormes" extremely popular in England may be seen by the numerous references to incidents in it made by Elizabethan dramatists, the most notable of which is that where Shakespeare — in "Much Ado About Nothing" (Act II, Scene I) — makes Benedict say: "Ho! now, you strike like the blind man; 'twas the boy that stole your meat and you'll beat the post," which, as the reader will see, is one of the incidents in "Lazarillo de Tormes."

The popularity of "Lazarillo de Tormes" in England created a demand for picaresque novels and most of the notable Spanish picaresque novels were translated into English one after another, and in their turn exerted their influence on English literature. It were perhaps tedious to the reader, and altogether outside the purpose of this introduction, to give a complete reference to English works that show clear traces of picaresque influence exerted directly by the Spanish novels or through Le Sage's "Gil Blas." As a matter of curiosity, a few will be mentioned: Samuel Butler's "Hudibras," Fielding's "Joseph Andrews" and "Tom Jones," Richardson's "Pamela," Smollett's "Roderick Random," "Humphrey Clinker" and "Peregrine Pickle," Sterne's "Tris-

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tram Shandy ” and “The Sentimental Journey ” are all decidedly picaresque. And coming down to more recent times, there can be found many picaresque characters in the novels of Scott and Dickens. Mark Twain’s “Huckleberry Finn ” gives us a *pícaro* who is an American first cousin to Lazarillo, Guzmán de Alfarache, and all the rest of the Spanish *pícaros*. For a closer study of this subject, I would refer the reader to “Spanish Influence on English Literature,” by the late Martin Hume, an excellent book I have freely consulted in the preparation of this introduction.

The author of “Lazarillo de Tormes ” has remained unknown to this day, in spite of diligent searches by the erudite. Its authorship has been attributed to several writers: Fray Juan de Ortega, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, the brothers Valdés, Cristóbal de Villalón, Lope de Rueda and Sebastian de Horozco. In favor of the latter, Julio Cejador has written extensively and almost convincingly, yet — I prefer to look upon “Lazarillo de Tormes ” as an anonymous work belonging to no man in particular but to the whole Spanish nation, being, as it is, a manifestation of the national genius. There is nothing to support the claim in favor of Fray Juan de

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Ortega or Diego Hurtado de Mendoza save the say-so of some perfectly fallible people. The brothers Valdés and Cristóbal de Villalón are championed by those who attribute to Erasmus an importance he never had.

The Reformation was a sad blow to the Catholic Church, and perhaps nowhere else was it felt more than in Spain. Even the most bigoted Catholic could not deny the accusations of Luther and his followers against the gross abuses committed by the priesthood. They acknowledged that some reform was needed, and as they naturally refused to follow Luther — for he had placed himself outside the pale of the Catholic Church — they sought some one within the flock whom they might set up as a domestic reformer against the great heretic, and they chose Erasmus. But Erasmus was no reformer; his only valid claim to fame is as a Humanist. As a Catholic, he left a vast deal to be desired. Vain, pompous, ill-tempered, egotistic, he never thought of reforming the Catholic Church. He broke his monastic vows — which he had taken under no pressure whatsoever — and he raved against the monks simply because he wished to be free to roam all over Europe and be fêted by the mighty and the learned. The prestige which his

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classical studies had brought him, made him a prominent figure in the Catholic fold and he had a host of friends in Spain, beginning with the Emperor Charles V. It became fashionable to dub *erasmista* any writer who protested, more or less mildly, against the abuses of the priesthood, all on account of Erasmus' interested — and often mendacious — tirades against the monks.

In reality, the reforming influence of Erasmus in Spain is negligible. The fact of the matter is that the arrogance, impudence, lasciviousness and cupidity of the Catholic clergy had reached a stage where even the most bigoted could see — without Erasmus' help — that something was rotten in the kingdom of Spain. Such being the case, and given the enormous number of monks, nuns and priests that swarmed the Peninsula, it was only natural that when Spanish authors forsook the chivalrous clouds to come down to earth and began to draw their characters from real life, they should devote their attention to the gentry of the cloth.

For this reason, the author of "Lazarillo de Tormes" probably was no reformer at all. He was an artist who wished to bring into his canvas — without overcrowding it — as many figures as would

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be necessary to represent the society in which he lived, but without any *arrière pensée*, though he must have had many a hearty chuckle to himself when he portrayed his characters. And I say this bearing in mind that "Lazarillo de Tormes" is not complete in the form in which it has come down to us.

"Lazarillo de Tormes" first had to pass the ecclesiastical censor, and there is no reasonable doubt that the worthy gentleman had no scruples about amputating whatever offended his religious feelings. How else can we account for the extreme shortness of the chapters dealing with a monk and a chaplain? It is unlikely that the author would make them as short as they are now. They probably were of average length, but perhaps the monk and the chaplain were too vividly painted even for an ecclesiastical censor who, after all, could not be accused of being too narrow-minded.

Higher authorities evidently thought the censor too lax in the performance of his duties, for "Lazarillo de Tormes" was placed on the Index and its further publication in Spain was forbidden. However, such was the popularity of the little book that innumerable copies of it were introduced into the Peninsula from foreign presses, and as this contra-

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band could not be stopped, the ecclesiastical authorities finally gave in and allowed it to be printed again in the land of its birth.

It is a pity that through religious intolerance we should have lost the portraits of the monk and the chaplain, but there are enough characters in the little novel so masterfully drawn as thoroughly to justify its popularity. With sober, though colorful phrases, which, if somewhat awkward at times, still ring with the deep-toned sonorousness of a Castilian unalloyed as yet with Italian and French barbarisms, the author of "Lazarillo de Tormes" has transferred to the pages of his book the types he met in the towns and villages of Castile and Leon. His language is so plain, so devoid of rhetorical claptrap and pedantic erudition, that some critics have thought Lazarillo himself must have written the novel. He may have done so, and if such be the case, I do not think any one ever made his autobiography so artless and naïve, and yet so interesting, save perhaps Benvenuto Cellini, who could wield a candid and picturesque quill almost as skillfully as he could handle a chisel or a dagger and who, by the way, was somewhat of a *pícaro*.

Since Rowland made the first English translation

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of "Lazarillo de Tormes," several writers have attempted the same task, and although none of them has given a complete and faithful rendering of the little novel, still new editions of the book keep cropping up now and then. In the following translation, I have endeavored to be faithful above all. Nothing has been left out and nothing has been changed, except when structural differences in the two languages absolutely compelled me to do so, which, fortunately, has not been often. In reading "Lazarillo de Tormes," if certain phrases and paragraphs do not make very smooth reading, it should be remembered that the novel is almost four hundred years old and that I have made no attempt to modernize it in any way whatsoever. And this statement should not be taken as a repudiation of responsibility.

MARIANO JOAQUIN LORENTE.

LAZARILLO OF TORMES
HIS LIFE
FORTUNES
MISADVENTURES

LAZARILLO¹ OF TORMES
HIS LIFE
FORTUNES AND MISADVENTURES

PROLOGUE

I HOLD it as beneficial that signal events, perhaps never seen or heard of, should be brought to the notice of the many, and not be buried in the grave of oblivion; for it might be that whoever reads them may find something therein to please him, and that even those who do not go very deep into them may derive some amusement. To this effect, Pliny² says that there is no book, however bad it may be, that does not contain something good, especially as tastes differ, so that what one man despises, another would die for. And so, we find that things lightly held by some persons are not so regarded by others, which is the reason why nothing should be condemned and discarded, unless it were utterly detestable. Rather it should be communicated to other people, more especially if there were no harm in it and some good might be derived therefrom.

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For, if it were otherwise, very few writers would care to write for one single reader, seeing that it is a toilsome task; and as they have to endure its hardships, they want to be recompensed, not with money, but with finding their works read and, if they should deserve it, praised. And to this effect Tullius³ says: "Honor fosters the arts."

Who would imagine that the soldier, who is first in the social scale, hates life more than anybody else? Of course he does not, but his craving for praise makes him face danger, and the same thing happens in the arts and letters. A divine preaches most excellently, for he is a man who has very much at heart the welfare of souls; but ask his worship if he is sorry when some one says to him: "Oh, and how marvellously your reverence has spoken!" A certain knight, who had wretchedly jousted, gave his coat of mail to a rogue who had praised him for his fine tilting; what would he not have done for him had his flattery been merited?

And everything happens in that fashion; for I confess I am not any holier than my neighbors, and I shall not be sorry if all those who read and solace themselves with this trifle, which I am writing in this slovenly style, will find pleasure in seeing that a man

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can live through so many fortunes, dangers and adversities.

I beg Your Worship to accept this poor service from the hand of him who would make it more valuable if his powers were commensurate with his wishes. And as Your Worship asks me to write and relate my case in detail, it seems to me better not to start in the middle, but to begin at the beginning, in order that there may be a complete account of my person. And likewise, so that those who inherited noble estates may consider how little is due them, for Fortune was rather partial to them, and how much more has been accomplished by those whom she did not favor, but who through strength and cunning managed to row themselves into a safe harbor.

FIRST TREATISE

LAZARUS RELATES HIS LIFE AND TELLS WHOSE SON HE WAS

LET Your Worship know, first of all, that my name is Lazarus of Tormes⁴ and that I am the son of Thomas Gonzales and Antona Pérez, natives of Tejares,⁵ a village in Salamanca.⁶ My birth took place in the river Tormes, which is the reason why I adopted my present surname, and it happened in this fashion: My father — may the Lord forgive him — was charged with furnishing grain for a mill situated on the banks of the river, and in which he had been miller for over fifteen years. And one night that my mother happened to be in the mill, being heavy with me, she was taken with pains and was delivered right there. So that I can truthfully say that I was born in the river.

When I was eight years old, they accused my father of performing some blood-letting operations on some of the bags of corn that were brought to be ground. He, therefore, was apprehended, and he confessed

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and denied not,⁷ and suffered persecution for righteousness' sake.⁸ I hope in the Lord that he is now in heaven, for the Gospel calls such people blessed.⁸

At this juncture, an expedition was being fitted against the Moors, and my father, who at that time lived in banishment for the misfortune already mentioned, joined it as mule-tender to a gentleman who went with it. And as a loyal servant, he ended his life along with his master.

My widowed mother, deprived of husband and home, determined to seek the company of decent folks and become one of them, and she came to live in the city, and hired a small house where she cooked meals for certain students, and did washings for the stable grooms of the Comendador de la Magdalena,⁹ so that she gradually visited the stables.

In this fashion, she became acquainted with a colored man who looked after the animals. The man used to come to our house occasionally, and stayed until the following morning. Again, he used to come to the door on the pretence of buying eggs, and then walked into the house. At first, I disliked him and was afraid of him, seeing the color and ugly mien he had; but, discovering that with his visits our provisions improved considerably, I took a liking to him,

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for he always brought bread, pieces of meat and, in winter time, logs with which we warmed ourselves.

So that, as the visits and conversations continued, my mother finally presented me with a very pretty little nigger and I looked after and played with him.

And I remember that one day, when my negro stepfather was playing with the little boy, as the youngster saw that my mother and I were white and his father was not, he became frightened and ran away from him towards my mother, pointing him out with his finger and saying: "Mamma, *coco!*"¹⁰

And my stepfather replied, laughing: "You son of a bitch!"¹¹

Although I was but a boy at the time, I noticed my little brother's words and I said to myself: "How many people there must be in the world who run away from other folks because they can't see themselves!"

It was our luck that the conversations with Zayde,¹² for that was the negro's name, should reach the ear of the majordomo, and after inquiries, he discovered that he was stealing half the barley given him for the horses, as well as bran, wood, currycombs, aprons and the blankets and coverings for the horses that had been unaccountably lost, and that when he could not lay hands on other things, he unshod the horses and

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brought everything to my mother, so that she could bring my little brother up. / Let us not marvel at a cleric or a friar, when the one steals from the poor and the other from his convent to help his fair devotees and such like, that even a poor slave could be induced by love to do the same thing.

He was convicted of all I have mentioned, and even more. For they threatened me and, as I was only a boy, I answered their questions through fear, and discovered everything, even to certain horseshoes that my mother told me to sell to a farrier.

My unfortunate stepfather was flogged and tarred and my mother was ordered by the court, under pain of the customary hundred lashes,¹³ not to enter the house of the aforesaid Comendador or to shelter the sorrowful Zayde in her own.

So as not to make matters worse, the poor woman braced herself up and obeyed the sentence. And to avoid any danger and prevent evil tongues from wagging, she hired herself as a servant to the guests at the inn of the Solana.¹⁴ There, suffering a thousand importunities, my little brother grew up until he was able to walk, by which time I had become a lad that was able to bring wine and candles to the guests who sent me on such errands.

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At that time, there came to the inn a blind man who, thinking that I might be able to lead him, asked me from my mother, and she entrusted me to him, telling him that I was the son of an honest man who, for the sake of the faith, had died in the battle of Gelves,¹⁵ and that she trusted to the Lord I would be as good a man as my father, and she begged him to treat me well and look after me, for I was an orphan.

He answered that he would do so, and that he would look upon me, not as a servant, but as a son. And thus I began to serve and guide my new old master.

As we had been in Salamanca several days and my master thought that his earnings did not come up to his expectations, he determined to leave the place. And when we were about to depart, I went to see my mother, and amidst our tears, she gave me her blessing and said:

“My son, I know I shall never see you again. Try and be good, and may the Lord guide you. I have brought you up and I have entrusted you to a good master; look to yourself.”

And so, I went to meet my master, who was waiting for me.

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We left Salamanca, and having reached the bridge, we approached a stone animal which looks very much like a bull, and is located at the entrance, and the blind man ordered me to walk up to the animal and, once there, he told me:

“Lazarus, stick your ear up against this bull and you will hear a great noise inside it.”

I foolishly obeyed him, believing what I was told. And when he felt that my head was close to the stone, he pushed hard with his hand and gave me such a bump against the damned bull that the pain from the blow lasted me for over three days, and he said:

“Fool, learn; for a blind man’s boy should know a shade more than the devil.”

And he laughed at the joke.

It seemed to me at that moment that I awoke from the simple-mindedness in which, being a mere boy, I had been asleep. I said to myself:

“This man is telling the truth. It behooves me to keep my eyes open and look out, for I am all alone, and I ought to think how to fend for myself.”

We started on our way and in a few days he taught me the thieves’ slang. And as he saw that I was very apt, he was very pleased and said:

“I can’t give you gold or silver¹⁶; but I can teach

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you many things that will help you along in life.”

And so it was, for, after God, that man gave me my life, and although he was blind, he enlightened me and fitted me for the business of life.

I take pleasure in relating these trifles to Your Worship to show how praiseworthy are those lowly men who know how to rise, and how wicked are those who, born to a high station, lower themselves.

Coming back to my blind man and the story of his affairs, let Your Worship know that since God created the world, He never made a craftier and more astute man. He was a very eagle in his profession. He knew by heart over one hundred prayers and he said them in a deep, measured and most sonorous tone, that resounded in the churches where he prayed, and with a humble and devout mien which he very properly assumed on those occasions, without making any grimaces with his face or eyes, as other people usually do.

Besides this, he had other thousand ways and fashions of obtaining money. He said he knew prayers applicable to many and widely different cases: for women who did not bear children, for those who were about to be delivered of them, and for ill-matched women who wanted their husbands to love

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them better. He foretold women heavy with child whether it was going to be a boy or a girl.

And as regards medicine, he used to say that Galen¹⁷ did not know half as much as he did about toothaches, fainting fits and feminine complaints. Finally, whoever complained to him about some ailment, was immediately told:

“Do this, do that, boil such and such an herb, chew such and such a root.”

With all these accomplishments, everybody was after him, especially women, for they believed everything he told them. From the latter, he obtained great profits through the arts I have mentioned, and he earned more in one month than an hundred ordinary blind men do in a year.

But I wish Your Worship to know that for all he earned and had, I never saw such an avaricious and mean man; so much so that he nearly starved me to death, and only gave me less than one half of what I needed. I am telling the truth: if with my art and cunning I had not looked after myself, I would have died of hunger many a time. But, for all his knowledge and experience, I outmaneuvered him always, or nearly always; for most of the time I managed to get the largest and the best part of what he got. In

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order to manage this, I played him some devilish tricks, of which I will relate a few, although not all of them are to my credit.

He carried bread, as well as everything he took along with him, in a linen bag which was closed at the mouth by an iron ring and a padlock with its key, and as he put things in or took them out, he was so watchful and careful that no man on earth could have stolen even a crumb from him. I simply had to take the niggardly portion he gave me, and it disappeared in less than two bites.

When he had locked the padlock and relaxed his watch, thinking that I was busy with other things, through a seam on the side of the bag that I ripped and sewed up again every now and then, I bled the avaricious bag, helping myself to bread — not in small morsels, but in chunks — slices of bacon and sausages. And thus I never missed an opportunity of satisfying the want in which the bad blind man tried to keep me.

All I could sneak or steal, I kept in half *blancas*,¹⁸ and when people asked him to pray and gave him *blancas*, as he lacked his sight, no sooner had the giver dropped the coin than I caught it in my mouth and had a half *blanca* ready, so that no matter how

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quickly he put forth his hand, the gift reached it depreciated in half its value. The mean blind man complained to me because, by feeling it, he knew at once that it was not a whole *blanca*, and he would say:

“What the devil is the meaning of this? For since you are with me, people only give me half *blancas* and before they used to pay me a *blanca* and even a *maravedi*.¹⁹ You must be the cause of this misfortune.”

He also used to shorten up his prayers and left one-half unsaid, because he had ordered me to tug at his cloak as soon as the person who had commanded the prayer had gone away. And I did as I was told. He then started to shout again, saying:

“Have such and such a prayer said!” as is the usual way.

He was in the habit of keeping close by, when we were having our meals, a little jug of wine, and I took it and gave it a couple of silent kisses and returned it to its proper place. But it did not last very long. For, as he drank, he noticed the shortage, and in order to safeguard his wine, he never again left the jug exposed and kept it seized by the handle. But never did loadstone exert such powerful attraction

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as I did with a long oat straw that I fashioned for the purpose and with which, introducing it through the mouth of the jug, I sucked all the wine and left it dry. But as the old rascal was so cunning, I think he must have felt me, for thenceforth he changed his ways, and placed the jug between his legs and covered it with his hand, thus making sure of his drink.

As I was used to wine, I was dying for it, and seeing that the trick of the straw availed me nothing, I decided to bore a little hole in the bottom of the jug and to cover it with a very thin plug of wax, and at meal times, pretending I was cold, I sat between the mean blind man's legs, to warm myself at the fire we kept, and the heat of it soon melted the wax, for there was very little of it, and the spring began to flow into my mouth, which I placed in such a way that not a drop was lost. When the poor man wanted to drink, he found nothing in his jug.

He was astonished, cursed himself and consigned the jug and wine to the devil, being at a loss what the matter might be.

"You can't say, uncle, that I have drunk your wine," I used to say, "for you have kept it in your hand all the time."

He turned and turned the jug and felt it over and

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over again; so much so that he found the hole and discovered the trick, but he pretended not to be aware of it.

And the next day, having arranged the jug as usual, and not thinking of the misfortune that was awaiting me, or that the blind man was minding me in the least, I sat down in my accustomed place. And as I was enjoying the sweet fluid, my face turned up to the sky and my eyes half closed, the better to taste the delectable liquid, the desperate blind man felt that the time had come to take his revenge, and raising that sweet and bitter jug with both hands, he banged it down upon my mouth with all his might, so that poor Lazarus, who did not dream what was going to happen to him, but, on the contrary, was at ease and enjoying himself, as was his wont, thought that the very heaven, with all it contains, had collapsed on top of him.

Such was the blow, that it knocked me unconscious, and such the smash, that the pieces of the jug stuck in my face, tearing it in many places and breaking some teeth, without which I have had to do ever since. From that moment, I hated the blind man, and although he liked me and cured me, I could very well see that he had enjoyed the cruel punishment he inflicted

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upon me. He washed with wine the wounds caused by the pieces from the jug, and he smiled saying:

“What do you think of it, Lazarus? The very thing that made you sick, cures you and gives you health.” And other witty phrases that were not to my liking. *L*

When I had half recovered from the blow and wounds, thinking that with a few such accidents the cruel blind man would have to do without my services, I decided to do without his company, but not in a hurry, for it would suit me better to wait for a favorable occasion. Although I might have wished within my heart to forgive him the blow, the bad treatment he inflicted upon me would have prevented my so doing, for he abused me with kicks and blows.

And if any one chanced to ask me why he ill-treated me so, he immediately told the story of the jug, saying:

“Perhaps you think that this lad is an innocent lamb? Now, listen and see if the very devil would have thought of such a trick.”

His listeners crossed themselves and said:

“Who would have thought that such a small boy would be so mean!”

And they laughed at the stratagem, and said to him.

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“Punish him, punish him and the Lord will reward you.”

And with this encouragement, he never stopped abusing me.

And because of this, I always purposely led him by the worst roads; if there were stones, I took him over them; if there was mud, I guided him through the deepest part. For, although I was not walking on dry land myself, I was delighted to lose one of my eyes so that he, who did not have the use of any, would lose both his. This made him poke me in the back of my head with the end of his stick, so that it was always bald and sore. And although I swore I was not doing it on purpose, but because there was no better road, it availed me naught, for he did not believe me; such was the cunning and great understanding of the fiend.

And in order that Your Worship may know how far extended the intelligence of this astute blind man, I will tell you one case, out of many that happened to me with him, which very clearly demonstrates his great astuteness. When we left Salamanca, it was because he wanted to come to the country of Toledo.²⁰ For he said that its people are richer, although not very fond of almsgiving. He trusted to the proverb

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that says: "A hard-hearted man gives more than a naked man." And on our way, we passed through some of the best towns. Wherever he was welcome and he earned considerable money, we stayed a long time; otherwise we shifted in three days.

It happened that, having arrived at a town called Almorox²¹ when they were collecting the grapes, one of the vintagers gave him a bunch by way of alms. And because the baskets are roughly handled, and also because the grapes at that time are much too ripe, the berries became detached from the stem in his hand. Had he put it in his bag, it would have turned into stum along with whatever came into contact with it.

He decided to make a banquet with it, partly because he could not carry it and partly to please me, for that day he had given me many kicks and blows. We sat down against a hedge and he said:

"I want now to be very liberal with you; we'll eat this bunch of grapes together and you'll have as large a share as myself. We'll divide it up thus: you pick one and then I'll pick another, provided you promise me not to take more than one grape at a time. I'll do likewise until we finish it up, and in this way there'll be no fraud."

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Having agreed to this, we started; but at the second picking, the traitor changed his mind and began to take them in twos, thinking, no doubt, that I was doing the same thing. When I saw that he was breaking the agreement, not satisfied with keeping step with him, I went him one better and took them in twos and threes and more, if I could. When the bunch was finished, he kept the stem in his hand awhile, and shaking his head, he said:

“Lazarus, you have cheated me. I’ll swear to God that you have eaten the grapes in threes.”

“I did not,” I said. “But, why did you suspect me of doing such a thing?”

The crafty blind man answered:

“Do you know why I can see that you ate them in threes? Because I ate them in twos and you never said a word.”

I laughed to myself, and although I was but a boy, I noticed carefully the blind man’s discretion.

In order to avoid prolixity, I omit many things, both funny and notable, that happened to me with this my first master, but I wish to relate the way in which I took leave of him. We were in Escalona,²² a town belonging to the duke of that name, staying in a hostel, and he gave me a piece of sausage to

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roast. When he had eaten some pieces of bread smeared with the fat from the sausage, he took out of his bag one *maravedi* and sent me to fetch some wine from the tavern. The devil must have arranged things to tempt me, for as they say, opportunity makes the thief. And so it happened that close to the fire there was a small, longish, rotten turnip which, not being fit for the pot, must have been thrown aside.

As we were alone at the time, and as my appetite had been greatly whetted by the savory aroma from the sausage, which aroma was the only thing I would be allowed to taste, not looking to the consequences and vanquishing all fear that might keep me from accomplishing my desire, I took the sausage from the spit while the blind man was taking the money out of the bag, and very deftly substituted the turnip in its place. As my master was giving me the money for the wine, he seized the spit and began to turn it in front of the fire, thus roasting the turnip whose demerits had saved it from being boiled.

I went for the wine and very quickly dispatched the sausage, and when I came back, I found the sinful blind man with the turnip — whose identity he had not discovered because he had not felt it with his

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hand — between two slices of bread. As he raised the slices to his mouth and sank his teeth into them, thinking that he would get a bite of sausage, he discovered the turnip. At once he flew into a passion, and he said:

“What’s the meaning of this, Lazarillo?”

“Alas, poor me!” I exclaimed. “What do you want to blame me for now? Haven’t I just arrived from bringing the wine? There must have been some one here who played a trick on you.”

“No, no,” he said. “I never let go the spit. It isn’t possible.”

I began to swear over and over again that I was innocent of that substitution and exchange; but it was of no avail, for nothing could be hidden from the cursed blind man’s astuteness. He got up, seized me by the head and began to sniff me. He must have felt my breath, like a good bloodhound, and with the desire to find out the truth and the rage he was in, he seized me with both hands, opened my mouth more than was fair, and stuck his nose into it. Which nose, ordinarily long and sharp, seemed to have grown with his fury several inches. The tip of it reached my gullet.

With this and the great fear I felt, not to mention

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the fact that in the short interval that had elapsed the black sausage had not had time to settle in my stomach, but, above all, with the tickling from his respectable nose, which nearly choked me, the evil deed and the dainty came to light, and what I had stolen was returned to its owner. It happened thus: before the bad blind man had time to withdraw his snout from my mouth, my stomach suffered such a turn that it flung the stolen goods against it, so that his nose and the half-chewed black sausage left my mouth at one and the same time.

Great God! I wish I had been buried at that very hour! For I was very nearly dead. Such was the fury of the fiendish blind man that if some people had not come at the noise he was making, I think he would have finished me. They dragged me from his hands, leaving them full of the few hairs I had, with my face scratched and my neck and throat torn by his nails. And it was well they rescued me, for all my misfortunes were due to his meanness.

The bad blind man recounted to those present my tricks, giving them, over and over again, a detailed account of the affairs of the jug and of the bunch of grapes, as well as of the present incident. The general laughter was such that the people passing by in

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the street came in to see the fun. And the blind man related my prowess with such humor and wit that, although I was sore and crying, it seemed to me an injustice on my part not to laugh at them.

While this was going on, it flashed through my mind that I had been guilty of weakness and cowardice, for which I cursed myself, in not depriving him of his nose, seeing that the opportunity had been excellent and half the trouble in accomplishing the operation was saved. For by simply closing my teeth, his nose would have been mine, and perhaps considering that it had belonged to that fiend, my stomach would have retained it better than it did the sausage, and then, if it could not be found, I could not have been accused of stealing it. I wish to God I had done so, for it would have been a pretty fair piece of business.

The hostess and the rest of the company made us friends again, and with the wine I had brought, they washed my face and throat. This gave the bad blind man another opportunity to display his humor, saying:

“Truly, this lad makes me spend more money in wine for his washings in one year than I drink in two. Really, Lazarus, you owe more to wine than to

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your own father, for he engendered you once, but wine has brought you back to life more than a thousand times."

And then he related how many times he had broken my head and scratched my face, which he afterwards cured with wine.

"I'm telling you," he said. "If any man will be blessed with wine, it is you."

And those who were washing me, laughed at his witticisms, although I cursed and swore. But the blind man's prediction did not turn out false, and since then I have remembered that man many a time, for he seemed to be possessed by some prophetic spirit, and I have felt sorry for all the trouble I gave him, although I paid him for it when one considers what I had to suffer the day he made the prophecy, which turned out very true, as Your Worship shall see.

Everything considered, and tired of the pranks the blind man played on me, I made up my mind to leave him, and as I had already decided to part company with him, his last trick made me all the more determined in my intention. And it happened that the following day, after a rainy night, we went through the streets of the town begging for alms. It continued to

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rain during the day, and so we took shelter under some arcades they have in that town, and we did not get wet; but as night was closing on and it did not stop raining, the blind man said to me:

“Look here, Lazarus, this water is very stubborn and the darker it gets the harder it pours. Let us take shelter in the hostel as soon as we can.”

In order to go there, it was necessary to cross a brook that was quite swollen with the heavy rain.

I said to him:

“Uncle, the brook is very wide, but if you want me to, I’ll take you to a place where we can cross it quicker and without getting wet, for there it narrows down a lot, and we can jump it without wetting our feet.”

My advice seemed good to him, and he said:

“You are a clever lad, and that’s the reason I like you so well. Take me to that place where the brook narrows down, for it is winter now, and water tastes bad, and it is rather risky to get your feet wet.”

When I saw that everything seemed favorable to my desire, I took him from the arcades and led him straight to a pillar or post of stone that was standing in the square and which, along with similar posts,

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served to support lean-tos from the surrounding houses, and I said to him:

“Uncle, this is the narrowest place there is in the brook.”

As it was raining hard and he was getting wet, and with the hurry we were in to get out of the rain, but, above all, because the Lord blinded his mind (it must have been so that I might take my revenge on him), he believed me and said:

“Head me in the right direction and jump the brook.”

I placed him fair and square in front of the pillar, took a jump and placed myself behind the post, as if I had been dodging a charging bull, and I said to him:

“Go on! Jump with all your might so that you can land on this side safely.”

I had hardly finished talking when the poor blind man stood up like a he-goat, took a step or two backwards, in order to sprint and jump all the more, and banged his head against the post, sounding as loud as if it had been a huge pumpkin. He then fell backwards, half dead, with his head split open.

“How is that? You smelled the sausage and you could not smell the post? Well, well!” I said.

And I left him in the hands of many people who

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had come to his assistance. I ran to the gate of the town as fast as I could, and before nightfall, I landed in Torrijos.²³ I never learnt what God did with him, nor did I bother to find out.

SECOND TREATISE

HOW LAZARUS HIRED HIMSELF TO A CLERGYMAN, AND THE HARSHIPS HE HAD TO ENDURE WITH HIM

NEXT day, feeling rather unsafe in Torrijos, I went to a place called Maqueda,²⁴ where my sins made me meet a clergyman who, when I begged him for an alms, asked me if I knew how to serve Mass. I said yes, and it was true. For although he had ill-treated me, the sinful blind man had taught me many good things, and that was one of them. Finally, the clergyman took me as his servant.

I escaped the thunder and was struck by the lightning. For the blind man, though he was cupidity personified, as I have already mentioned, was an Alexander the Great²⁵ compared to my new master. I will say no more about him except that all the meanness in the world was concentrated in his person. I do not know whether it was his nature or whether he had acquired it with his ecclesiastical habit.

He had an old chest, locked with a key which he carried in a strap tied around his waist. And as

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soon as a *bodigo*²⁶ came from the church, he placed it in the chest with his own hands and locked it up. And in the whole house there was not a thing to eat, unlike what happens in other houses where they always have some bacon hanging up to smoke, a cheese on a shelf or in a cupboard, or a basket with the bread left over from the table. Which things, it seems to me, would have consoled me by just looking at them, even if I had not helped myself to them.

There was only a string of onions, and that was well locked up in a room in the upper story of the house. Of these onions I received one every four days as my ration, and when I asked for the key to go and get it, if there was company, he ceremoniously unfastened it from the strap and handed it to me, saying:

“Here you are. Bring it back right away and don’t make a beast of yourself.”

As if under that key had been stored all the preserves of Valencia,²⁷ when there was nothing in the room, as I have said, except the onions hanging from a nail! Which onions he had carefully counted up, and if, for my sins, I had gone beyond the share allotted to me, I would have paid dearly for it.

Finally, I was dying of hunger. And although he

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was very uncharitable towards me, he did not stint himself in the least. Five *blancas* of meat he spent for his daily fare. It is true that he shared with me the soup, but as regards the meat, devil a scrap did I get! A little bread came my way, but would to God he had given me one-half of what I really needed!

It is the custom in that part of the country to eat sheeps' heads on Saturdays,²⁸ and he used to send for one, which cost three *maravedis*. He boiled the head, ate the eyes and the tongue and the back of the neck and the brains and the meat of the jaws, and handed me the bones all cleaned up. And he gave them to me on a plate, saying:

"There! Eat and enjoy yourself, for the world is yours. You lead a better life than the Pope."

"I hope the Lord will give you a life such as mine," I said to myself.

When I had been with him three weeks, I became so thin that I could not stand on my legs through sheer hunger. I clearly saw that I was headed for the grave if God and my cunning did not mend matters. But I had no occasion to exercise my arts, for there was nothing on which to do so. And even if there had been, I could not make him blind, as was my former master, whom God pardon if he died from

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his bump against the post. For clever and all, as he was, with the lack of that precious sense, he could not detect me; but there was no man alive who had such a sharp eyesight as my clergyman.

When we were at the offertory, there was not one *blanca* that fell into the plate which he did not notice. He kept one eye on the congregation and one on my hands. His eyes danced in their orbits as if they had been quicksilver. He counted all the *blancas* that were offered. And when the offertory was over, he took the plate from me and placed it on the altar.

I never managed to steal one single *blanca* all the time I lived, or rather died, with him. I never brought him one *blanca's* worth of wine from the tavern, for he used so sparingly the little wine from the offering,²⁹ which he had locked up in the chest, that it lasted him through the week.

And in order to disguise his meanness, he used to say to me:

“Look here, my lad, we priests must be very temperate in eating and drinking, and that is why I don’t go into excesses, as others do.”

But the mean wretch lied through and through, for at brotherhood meetings and at funerals, where we

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prayed, he ate like a wolf and drank like a quack doctor³⁰ at other people's expense.

And talking about funerals, may the Lord forgive me, for I never wished my neighbour any ill except then. And that was because we ate well and I had my fill. I hoped and I even begged the Lord to kill a person each day. And when we gave the sacraments to sick people, especially extreme unction, as the clergyman orders those present to pray, I was by no means the last to pray, but with all my heart and will I begged the Lord, not, as the common saying goes, to do His will with the patient, but to remove him altogether from this world.

And when one of them managed to escape, may the Lord forgive me for it! I consigned him to the devil a thousand times. And he who died received as many blessings from me. In all the time I was there, which must have been about six months, only twenty persons died, and they must have been killed by me or, rather, they died at my request. For the Lord, seeing my wretched and continual dying, was pleased, I think, to kill them, in order to give me my life. But I could find no remedy for my sufferings, for if I lived on the days we buried some one, the days when there was no funeral I returned to my daily

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hunger, and I felt it all the more after the fillings of the funeral feasts. So that I could not find any rest, save in Death, whom I invoked for myself as I did for others at times; but I could not see him, although he was always with me.

I thought many a time of leaving my mean master, but I did not carry out my intention for two reasons. First, because I could not trust my legs, afraid as I was of the weakness that through sheer hunger seized me. The other was, as I used to say to myself, after careful consideration:

“I have had two masters; the first kept me almost dead with hunger, and when I left him I bumped into my present master, who keeps me on the verge of the grave, also with hunger. Now then, if I leave him and find a worse one, what will I do but die?”

And with this reflection, I dared not shift. For I firmly believed that I would go from bad to worse. And if my condition grew worse in the slightest, Lazarus would not make any noise nor would his name be known in the world.

As I was struggling with this affliction, from which may the Lord deliver all faithful Christians, and being unable to counsel myself, for my situation showed no improvement, one day that my miserable,

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mean and wretched master was away from home, there happened to come to the door a tinker who I think was an angel led to me by the hand of God in that disguise. He asked me if I had anything to mend.

“In myself you would have a lot to do, and you would be mighty busy if you tried to mend me,” I said in a low voice, which he did not hear.

But, as I had no time to waste in witticisms, being enlightened by the Holy Ghost, I said to him:

“My friend: I have lost the key of this chest and I am afraid my master will whip me. For any sake, see if among those keys you bring there you can find one that will fit, and I’ll pay you for it.”

The angelic tinker began to try one after another from a big bunch he had with him and I helped him with my feeble prayers. When I least expected it, I saw, as they say, the face of God³¹ in the shape of loaves of bread inside the chest. And when he opened it, I said:

“I have no money to give you for the key; help yourself to whatever you want from the chest as payment.”

He took one of the *bodigos*, the one that seemed best to him, and giving me the key, he went away very happy and leaving me happier still.

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However, for the present I did not touch a thing, so that the loaf would not be missed and also because, finding myself lord of such wealth, it seemed to me that hunger would not dare to come near me. My miserly master came home and the Lord was pleased not to make him notice that the angel had taken away one of the loaves.

Next day, as soon as he went out, I opened my broadly paradise and seized with hands and teeth one of the *bodigos*, and in less time than it takes to say two credos³² I made it invisible, taking good care to lock the chest up again. And I began to sweep the house, full of joy, thinking that with that remedy my sad life would be mended forever. And thus I spent that day and the next very happy. But it was not to be that my respite should last very long, for on the third day I was seized by a tertian.³³

And it so happened that I suddenly saw him who was killing me with hunger leaning over the chest, shifting and reshifting and counting and recounting the loaves. I pretended to be unconcerned, and in my secret prayers and pleadings I said:

“Saint John,³⁴ blind him!”

After he had spent a long time, counting by days on his fingers, he said:

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“If I hadn’t had this chest well locked up, I could swear that some one had stolen my loaves, but henceforth, and to do away with all suspicion, I will keep tabs on them. There are nine and a piece left.”

“May the Lord curse you nine times!” I said to myself.

His words seemed to pierce my heart like a huntsman’s arrow, and hunger began to gnaw at my stomach when I found myself doomed again to my former rations. He went out, and in order to console myself, I opened the chest, and when I saw the bread I began to adore it, not daring to receive it.³⁵ I counted the loaves, hoping that the wretch might have made a mistake, but I found his reckoning truer than I would have liked. The most I could do was to kiss the loaves a thousand times and to take a small bit from the piece, leaving it as far as possible in the same shape as it was before, and with it I passed the day, not quite so happy as the preceding one.

But, as my hunger kept growing, especially as my stomach had become used to a more liberal allowance in the previous two or three days already mentioned, I was dying a bad death; so much so that I kept opening and shutting the chest, contemplating

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God's face, which is what children call bread. But the Lord Himself, who helps the needy, seeing me in such straits, brought to my mind a slight remedy. And thinking it over, I said to myself:

"This big old chest is broken in many places, though the openings are very small. It might be that mice could get in and get at the bread. To take out a whole loaf is out of the question, for the man who keeps me in such dire need would miss it at once. But this is a different story."

And I began to crumble some bread on to a cheap table cloth that happened to be there, taking one loaf and dropping another, so that from each of three or four I took a few crumbs. Then, as if I were taking grains of sugar, I ate them and was comforted a little. And when he came home for his dinner and opened the chest, he saw the wreckage, and he undoubtedly thought the damage had been done by mice. For I had carefully faked the broken loaves and left them exactly as the mice might have done. He inspected the chest from end to end and found certain holes through which he suspected the mice had entered. And he called me, saying.

"Lazarus! Look! See what plague has fallen upon our bread last night!"

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I pretended I was very much astonished, and asked him what it might be.

“What could it be?” he said. “Mice, of course, for they can’t leave a thing alone.”

We began our meal and the Lord was pleased to make me lucky even in this. For I got more bread than the miserable portion that was usually my share. For he marked with a knife those parts he thought had been touched by the mice, and he said:

“Eat this, for mice are clean animals.”

And so, that day he added considerably to what I had obtained with my hands, or rather my nails, and we finished eating, though in reality I never got started.

And then a new misfortune assailed me, which was to find my master eagerly pulling nails off the walls and looking for small pieces of board with which he nailed and closed up all the holes in the old chest.

“Oh, my Lord!” I said then, “what misery, misfortunes and disasters we mortals have to endure, and how short-lived are our pleasures in this toilsome life! Here I was thinking that with my poor and sad remedy I would mend my life and make it bearable, and I was feeling a little happy and even consid-

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ered myself lucky. But my bad luck has wakened up this miserly master of mine and has given him even more energy than he already had (for mean people are ever energetic) and he is now closing the holes of the chest, as if he were closing the door of my comfort and opening the gate of my misery.”

Thus was I lamenting my luck, while the industrious carpenter, with many nails and boards, finished his work, saying:

“Now, my treacherous mice, you better change your mind, for in this house you are bound to fare ill.”

As soon as he left the house, I went over to see his handiwork, and I found that he had not left a hole in the sad old chest through which even a mosquito could pass. I opened the chest with my well-nigh useless key, without any hope of getting anything, and I found two or three broken loaves, which my master thought had been touched by the mice, and from them I took a trifle, touching them lightly, as if I had been a skillful fencer. As necessity is a great teacher, and as I always was in great want, I spent night and day thinking of some way to sustain my life. And I think that hunger enlightened me to find a remedy, for they say that it sharpens wits, and

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that the opposite happens when there is plenty, which is what happened with me.

As I lay awake one night thinking about these things and wondering how I could take advantage of the chest, I felt that my master was asleep, because he was snoring and breathing heavily, as he always did when he slept. I got up very quietly, and as I had thought out during the day what I was to do and had left an old knife that was knocking about in a place where I could find it, I went over to the sad chest and attacked it, using my knife like a gimlet, in the weakest part I could find. And as the chest was very many years old, instead of finding it strong and stubborn, I found it soft and worm-eaten and it soon surrendered and allowed me to drill a hole in its side. This done, I opened the chest, felt the loaves that were broken and helped myself to some bread in the manner I have already described. And somewhat comforted with this, I closed the chest again and returned to my straw, whereon I rested and slept a little.

I could not sleep very well and I blamed my lack of food. And so it must have been, for at that time the cares of the king of France³⁶ certainly did not keep me awake.

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Next day my lord and master saw the damage I had done both to the bread and the chest and he began to consign the mice to the devil, and he said:

“How can we explain this? We’ve never had mice in this house until now.”

And he probably was telling the truth. For if there was a house in the kingdom free from mice, it undoubtedly must have been his own, for mice do not usually stay where there is nothing to eat.

He hunted through the house and on the walls again for more nails and boards, and closed up the hole. When night came and he was asleep, I got on to my feet holding my knife, and what he closed during the day I unclosed at night. In this wise, we were so hard at it that he must have said to himself: “Where one door is closed, another is opened.” Finally, we seemed to have in our hands Penelope’s cloth,³⁷ for what he wove during the day, I undid at night. So that in a few days and nights we left the poor pantry in such shape that whoever had wanted to speak of it properly, rather than calling it a chest, would have said it was an old cuirass, such was the number of nails and rivets it had all over it.

When he found out that his labors were of no avail, he said:

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"This chest is so ill-treated and its wood is so old and weak that it won't be able to withstand any mouse. And it is getting into such a shape that it is of practically no use at all. And the worst of it is that, although it is of very little use, we would miss it if we didn't have it, and it would cost me three or four *reals* to replace it. The best thing I can think of, seeing that so far I haven't accomplished anything, is to set a trap inside for these cursed mice."

He then borrowed a trap, and with some cheese rind parings he begged from the neighbors he soon set the trap inside the chest. Which proved to be a singular help to me. For, as I did not need any sauces to eat, I was very glad to have the cheese rind, which I pulled off the trap, notwithstanding which, I continued to gnaw at the *bodigo*.

As he found the bread gnawed and the cheese gone, without the mouse falling into the trap, he became furious and inquired of the neighbors what could it be that ate the cheese and took it out of the trap, without any mouse falling into it, although the trap itself was unset.

The neighbors decided that it was not a mouse that was doing the damage, for it surely would have fallen into the trap. A neighbor said:

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“I remember there used to be a snake in your house, and it must be the cause of all the trouble. I think that must be it, for as it is so long, it can seize the bait, and although the trap falls on it, as only a part of it is inside, it can easily wriggle out of it.”

They all agreed that he was right, and my master became very much upset, and thenceforth he did not sleep as soundly as before. For at the least noise of a worm eating the wood in the night, he thought it was the snake gnawing at the chest. He immediately got up, and with a heavy stick he placed at the head of his bed ever since the snake was mentioned, he discharged some terrific blows on the sinful chest, hoping to scare the snake. He wakened up the neighbors with the fracas, and he did not let me sleep. He went over to my straw and upset it, and myself along with it, thinking that the reptile had gone over to my bed and was hiding in the straw or in my clothes. For they had told him that it often happened that those animals, seeking heat at night, went to the cradles where babies slept and bit them and placed them in great danger.

Most of the times, I pretended to be asleep, and the following morning he would ask me:

“My lad, didn’t you hear anything last night?”

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Because I was chasing that snake, and I think it went over to your bed, for those animals are very cold and seek heat."

"I hope to the Lord it won't bite me," I said, "for I am terribly scared of it."

With these things, he was so much upset and his sleep was so light that, upon my word, the snake did not dare touch or gnaw at the chest during the night; but in the daytime, while he was in the church or in town, I delivered my assaults upon the stronghold. And when he saw the damage done and how little his efforts availed him, he prowled all over the house, as I have said, at night like some accursed spirit.

I became afraid that with his searching he might find the key, which I used to place under my straw, and it seemed safer to me to place it in my mouth at night. For, ever since I was with the blind man, my mouth had become a bag, and it had happened at times that I had twelve or fifteen *maravedis*, all of them in half *blancas*, inside it, without their interfering with my eating. For otherwise I could not have called a *blanca* my own, as the confounded blind man would have taken it away from me, for he often searched every seam and fold of my clothes.

As I was saying, I used to put the key in my mouth

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every night and I slept without any fear of my warlock master finding it; but when misfortune dogs one's footsteps, it is useless to try and prevent it. My fate, or rather my sins willed that one night, as I was sleeping, the key shifted in my mouth, which must have been open at the time, in such a fashion that the air and breath that came from my mouth when I lay sleeping, issued through the shank of the key, which was hollow, and it whistled very hard, as my luck would have it, in such a way that my master, all upset, heard it and must have thought that it was the snake that was whistling.

He got up very quietly with the stick in his hand, and feeling his way along towards the place where the snake was whistling, he came to me very softly, so that the snake would not hear him. And when he was close to me, he thought that the snake must have gone to the straw, where I was lying, attracted by the heat. He raised his stick away up, and thinking that the snake was underneath and that he would kill it with one blow, he brought it down upon me with all his might and left me senseless and with a broken head.

As he felt he had struck something, for I must have moved with the pain from the terrific blow, he said

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afterwards that he came close to me, and calling me in a loud voice, tried to waken me. But, as he touched me and felt the great flow of blood I was losing, he realized that he had done me some harm. And in a great hurry he went to get a light, and bending over me with it, he found me groaning with the key still in my mouth, for I never let it go, half of it sticking out in the same fashion it must have been when I was whistling with it.

The scared snake killer wondered what that key might be; he took it out of my mouth and found what it was, for the guards were the same as those of his own key. He then went over to try it and discovered the whole plot.

The cruel hunter must have said to himself:

“I have found the mouse and the snake that were warring on me and eating my property.”

I could not give an account of what happened in the following three days, for I spent them in the belly of the whale,³⁸ but I can vouch for what I have just related, because when I regained my senses I heard my master talk about it, for he would tell the story in detail to all who came to the house.

At the end of three days I regained my senses and I found myself on my straw, my head all plastered up

SECOND TREATISE

and covered with oils and ointments, and I exclaimed, all scared:

“What’s all this?”

The cruel priest answered me:

“Faith, and I have caught all the mice and snakes that were ruining me.”

And I surveyed myself, and I found myself so ill-treated that I at once suspected my misfortune.

At this juncture, there came into the room an old witch and some neighbors. And they began to take off my bandages and to tend my wound. And as they found me returned to my senses, they were very pleased, and they said:

“As he has come back to life, perhaps the Lord will be pleased to put him out of danger.”

And they began again to talk about my troubles and to laugh at them, and I, poor sinner, to weep over them. With all this, they gave me something to eat, for I was faint with hunger, but they hardly gave me enough. And so, at the fifteenth day, I got up and was out of danger, though not free from hunger, and almost completely recovered.

The day after I rose, my lord and master seized me by the hand, led me outside the door, and once in the street, he said to me:

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“Lazarus, from today on, you are no longer mine. Look for a master, and God be with you. For I don’t want in my company such a diligent servant as yourself. You must have been a blind man’s boy, without a doubt.”

And crossing himself at me, as if I had been possessed of the devils, he went into the house and closed the door.

THIRD TREATISE

HOW LAZARUS HIRED HIMSELF TO A SQUIRE, AND WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM WHILE IN HIS SERVICE

IN this fashion, I was obliged to make the best out of a bad job, and in short stages, with the help of kind-hearted folks, I landed in this famous city of Toledo where, through the mercy of God, my wound healed up in fifteen days. And while I was convalescent, people always gave me alms, but when I was completely cured, they all said:

“You are a scoundrel and a vagabond. Look for a good master whom you may serve.”

“And where can I find one,” I said to myself, “unless God starts and creates one now, as he created the world?”

As I was going about from door to door, with very little luck, for Charity had gone to heaven,³⁹ the Lord made me meet a squire that was passing along the street, neatly dressed, carefully combed and of good gait and carriage. He looked at me and I at him, and he said to me:

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“Lad, are you looking for a master?”

I said to him:

“Yes, sir.”

“All right. Follow me,” he answered, “for the Lord has been kind to you in making you meet me. You must have put up some good prayer today.”

I followed him, thanking God for what I had heard and also because it seemed to me that the squire, by his dress and bearing, was the master I needed.

It was in the morning when I met this, my third master. And he made me follow him through a great part of the city. We passed through squares where bread and other provisions were sold. I thought and hoped that he would want to load me with the things that were being sold, for that was the proper time for people to provide themselves with all necessities. But he went by those things in a hurry.

“Perhaps he does not find here what he wants,” I said to myself, “and he wants to buy it elsewhere.”

In this fashion we walked until it struck eleven. He then went into the principal church, and I after him, and I saw him devoutly hearing Mass and other divine services until everything was finished and the people disbanded. We then left the church.

With hurried step we began to go down a street. I

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went along very happy seeing that we had not bothered to look for anything to eat. I imagined that my new master must have been a man who bought his provisions in large quantities and that the dinner would be ready just as I liked it and even needed it.

By that time, it struck one o'clock after noon and we arrived at a house before which my master stopped, and I with him. And swinging off his cloak on the left side, he pulled a key from his sleeve, opened the door, and we entered the house, which had such a dark and lugubrious entrance that it seemed to strike terror into those who entered it, although inside there was a small court and very fair rooms.

As soon as we entered, my master took off his cloak, and after asking me if my hands were clean, we shook it and folded it; and carefully blowing the dust off a stone bench that happened to be there, he laid it on top of it. That done, he sat close by and asked me very minutely who I was and how I had happened to come to that city.

I gave him a longer account of myself than I wished, for it seemed to me that the time was more convenient for ordering the table to be set and the dinner served than to be engaged in conversation. For all that, I satisfied him about my person in the best

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way I could lie, mentioning my good points and remaining silent about all the rest, not thinking it worthy of being repeated *in camera*. This done, he sat still for a while, which I took as an ill omen, for it was almost two o'clock and he was showing no more signs of eating than if he had been a corpse.

After this, I pondered on the fact that the house was locked up and that no footsteps of living person could be heard either up or downstairs in the whole house. All I had seen were walls, but not a chair or block or stool or table or even a chest like the famous one. Finally, the house seemed to be haunted. As we were thus, he said to me:

“My lad, have you had anything to eat?”

“No sir,” I said, “for it hadn’t struck eight when I met your worship.”

“Well, although it was so early, I had already breakfasted, and when I have a meal like that, I wish you to know that I never take anything else until the evening. Therefore, pass the time the best way you can, for we shall sup by and by.”

Your Worship may believe me, when I heard him say that, I was ready to faint, not so much through hunger but because I knew that luck was all in all against me. And there and then my hardships

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appeared before me anew and I began to weep over my misfortunes. And there came to my memory the reflection I used to make when I thought of leaving the clergyman, saying that although he was mean and miserly, perchance I would meet a worse one. Finally, I wept there over my past toilsome life and my close-coming death.

And withal, disguising my feelings the best way I could, I said:

“Sir, I am but a lad, and I don’t bother much about eating, blessed be the Lord. And I can boast of having the most moderate throat among my equals, and I have been greatly praised for it to this day by all the masters I have had.”

“That is a great virtue,” he said, “and I will love you all the more for it. For only swine stuff themselves up, while decent people eat with moderation.”

“I know what you mean, full well!” I said to myself. “Cursed be that virtue and goodness which I see my masters find in hunger!”

I went over near the door and I took out of my bosom some pieces of bread that remained from those given me for the Lord’s sake. When he saw them, he said:

“Come here, my lad. What are you eating?”

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I walked up to him and I showed him the bread. Of three pieces I had, he took the best and largest. And he said:

“Upon my life, this bread seems very good to me.”

“How is that, sir?” I said. “Does it look good to you now?”

“By my faith, yes,” he said. “Where did you get it? Was it kneaded by clean hands?”

“I don’t know about that,” I said, “but that doesn’t spoil the taste of it for me.”

“Praised be the Lord,” said my poor master.

And raising the bread to his mouth, he began to take as furious bites as I did on the other piece.

“By the Lord,” he said, “this bread tastes excellently.”

And as I guessed where his shoe was pinching him, I hurried up. For I saw that if he finished before I did, he would volunteer to help me with the remainder. And so we finished our pieces almost at the same time. And my master began to brush off some very small tiny crumbs that had stuck to his bosom. He then went into a neighboring room and brought out a chipped jug, not very new, and as soon as he had drunk, he offered it to me. And in order to appear abstemious, I said:

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“Sir, I don’t drink wine.”

“It is water,” he answered. “You may well drink of it.”

I then took the jar and drank. Not much, though, for thirst was not what was troubling me.

We spent the rest of the time until the evening talking of different things about which he asked me questions, while I replied to the best of my knowledge. He then took me into the room where the jar was from which we drank, and he said:

“Lad, stand over there and watch how we make this bed, so that henceforth you’ll be able to make it.”

I stood at one end and he at the other, and we made the wretched bed. In which there was not very much to do. For it consisted of a reed frame placed on two benches, over which were stretched some clothes over a black mattress. Which mattress, through want of washing, did not look like one, although it served as such, and it had considerably less wool than was needed. We laid down the mattress and tried to soften it, which was impossible, for one cannot very well turn a thing soft which is hard. The cursed mattress did not have a damned thing inside, so that when placed on the frame, all

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the reeds could be noticed, and they looked just like the ribs of an extremely thin pig. And on the mattress we placed a blanket to match, whose color I could not make out.

When the bed was made and night fell, he said to me:

“Lazarus, it is already late, and from here to the square the distance is rather long. Besides, there are a good many thieves in this city, and they assault people at night and steal their cloaks. Let us spend the night the best way we can, and tomorrow, at break of day, God will provide. Because I have been all alone, I haven’t taken in any provisions; I have had my meals outside all these days. But henceforth we will manage in another fashion.”

“Sir,” I said, “let not your worship worry about me in the least, for I can pass a night, and even more without eating, if necessary.”

“You shall live longer and healthier,” he answered me. “For, as we were saying today, there is nothing better, in order to live long, than to eat little.”

“If that’s the way,” I said to myself, “I shall never die, for I have always followed that rule through force, and I expect that my luck will make me follow it all my life.”

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And he went to bed, placing his doublet and his breeches at the head of it. And he ordered me to lie at his feet, which I did. But, damn the sleep I slept! For the reeds and my protruding bones never ceased fighting and quarrelling the whole night long. What with my hardships, misfortunes and hunger, I think there was not one pound of flesh on my body; and, besides, as I had hardly eaten a thing that day, I was raging with hunger, and hunger and sleep are not very good fellows. I cursed myself (may the Lord forgive me for it!) and my miserable luck more than a thousand times during that night, and, what was worse, as I dared not move so as not to waken my master, I asked God many times to send me death.

When morning came, we got up and my master began to clean and brush his breeches and doublet, coat and cloak. And I acted as his valet! He dressed himself very leisurely and at his pleasure. I gave him water to wash himself with; he combed himself and placed his sword in his belt, and as he was doing so, he said:

“My lad, if you only knew what sort of a weapon this is! There is no gold piece in the world I would exchange it for. Such as you see it, there is not one

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of the many Antonio⁴⁰ made that has such excellent steel as this one has.”

And he took it out of its sheath and felt it with his fingers, saying:

“Do you see it? I’ll undertake to cut a puff of wool in two with it.”

And I said to myself:

“And with my teeth, which are not of steel, I’ll undertake to split in two a four-pound loaf of bread.”

—He placed it back in its sheath and tightened up his belt, hanging from it a string of large beads. And with measured step and erect body, swaying it and his head majestically to and fro, throwing one end of his cloak over his shoulder or under his arm and placing his right hand on his hip, he went out, saying:

“Lazarus, look after the house while I go to hear Mass; make the bed and go with the jar to the river, which is a little way down from here, to fetch some water; and lock the door, so that they won’t steal anything from us; and leave the key under the door, so that I can get in if I happen to come back while you are out.”

And he went up the street with such noble countenance and carriage that any one who did not know

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him would have thought he was a close relative of Count Arcos,⁴¹ or at least the valet who helped him to dress.

“Blessed be the Lord, for He sends the malady and the remedy for it as well!” I said as I stood watching him. “Who will think on meeting my master there, for he looks so happy, but that he supped well last night and slept in a good bed, and that although it is so early in the morning, he has already breakfasted most excellently? Wondrous, oh Lord! are the secrets Thou workest and that people can’t unfathom! Who would not be deceived by his good bearing and by his fair coat and cloak? And who would think that such a nobleman spent the whole of yesterday without eating, save for a chunk of bread which his servant, Lazarus, carried one day and one night in the locker of his bosom, where it could not get very clean, and that today, when he washed his hands and face, for lack of a towel he had to use the tails of his coat? Certainly no one would suspect it. Oh Lord! and how many such as he must Thou have scattered all over the world, who suffer for their confounded so-called honor what they would not suffer for Thy sake!”

I stood at the door, looking at him and pondering

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over these and other things until my master disappeared at the end of the long and narrow street. And as soon as he was out of sight, I went back into the house and in less time than it takes to say a credo, I surveyed it all, upstairs and down, without finding a thing in it. I made the hard black bed, took the jar and went down to the river, where, in a neighboring garden, I found my master deeply engaged in conversation with two muffled women of those that are usually found there. For many of them are in the habit of going there early of a summer morning to take some refreshment or to breakfast, though they do not carry any provisions with them, for they feel sure there will be some one there who will give it to them, a habit to which they have become accustomed through the liberality of the noblemen of that locality.

And, as I say, he was between them, like another Macias,⁴² telling them more sweet things than Ovid⁴³ ever wrote. But when they saw that he was soft enough, they did not feel in the least ashamed to ask him for their breakfast, promising the usual payment.⁴⁴

My master, feeling as much cold in his purse as he felt warmth in his stomach, was seized by a shiver

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that changed the color of his face and he began to stammer and to mutter worthless excuses.

The women, who must have been experts, discovered what his ailment was and left him there for what he was.

I had diligently been eating some cabbage stocks, with which I breakfasted without being seen by my master and I returned to the house. I thought of sweeping some part of it, for it sadly needed it, but I did not find anything to do it with. I began to think what to do, and it seemed to me better to wait for my master until noon and have something to eat with him if perchance he brought some provisions, but I wasted my time.

When I saw it was two o'clock and he was not coming back and hunger was bothering me, I closed the door, placed the key where he told me and I returned to my old profession. In a low sickly voice, my hands on my bosom, my eyes turned to heaven and the name of God on my tongue, I started to beg bread at the doors of the largest houses. As I had suckled that profession with my mother's milk, that is to say, as I had learned it with the great master, the blind man, and I had been a very apt pupil, although there was but little charity in that city and the crops

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had been meagre that year, I managed so well that before the clock struck four I already had as many pounds of bread in the silo of my body, and more than two besides up my sleeves and in my bosom. I returned to the house, and as I was passing a tripe shop, I asked one of the women for something to eat and she gave me a piece of a cow's foot and some boiled tripe.

When I arrived home, my good master had already returned. He had folded up his cloak and placed it on the stone bench, and he was walking up and down the court. As soon as he saw me come in, he came towards me. I thought he was going to scold me for being late, but the Lord had not given him a bad temper. He asked me where I had come from.

I said to him:

"Sir, I stayed here until two o'clock, and when I saw that your worship was not coming, I went about the city, trusting to kindhearted people, and they have given me what you see here."

I showed him the bread and the tripe, which I had wrapped up in my cloak, and at sight of them his face brightened up, and he said:

"Well, I waited for you to come and have something to eat together, but as I saw you were not com-

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ing, I ate alone. But you have done the right thing. For it is better to ask for things in the name of the Lord than to steal them. So may He help me, I think what you have done is all right, but I warn you not to let anyone know that you are living with me, as it might impair my dignity. Although I suppose it will be easy enough to keep that fact secret, for very few people know me in this city. I wish I had never come to it!"

"Don't worry about it, sir," I said, "for nobody wants to ask me any questions and I am not willing to give any information."

"You can eat now, lad. And if it pleases the Lord we shall soon be free from troubles. Although, I may tell you that since I came to this house I have fared very badly. It must be a luckless house. There are ill-starred and unfortunate houses that communicate their ill-luck to those who live in them. This must be one of them without a doubt; but I promise you that after the end of the month I won't remain in it even if they give it to me as a gift."

I sat down at one end of the stone bench, and in order that he would not think me a glutton, I said nothing about what I had already eaten. And I began to make a meal of my tripe and bread, cautiously

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looking at my unfortunate master, who did not take his eyes off my lap, which at that time was doing duty for a plate. May the Lord have as much pity on me as I had on him, for I felt what he was feeling, and I had suffered, and still suffered every day through the same thing. I was wondering whether I should dare to invite him; but as he had said he had lunched, I was afraid he would not accept the invitation. Just the same, I was wishing the sinner would share my food and break his fast as he had done on the previous day, especially as the occasion was more favorable, for the viands were better and my own hunger less.

It pleased the Lord to satisfy my wish, and I think his too. For, as I began to eat and he was walking up and down the room, he came to me and he said:

“I tell you, Lazarus, you are more graceful in your eating than any man I ever saw in my life, and no one will see you eat but he will want to take something, even if he isn't hungry.”

“It is your own excellent hunger that makes you think I am graceful,” I said to myself.

Nevertheless, it seemed to me that I should coax him, seeing that he wanted to be coaxed and was laying himself open for it, and I said:

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“Sir, good tools make a good workman. This bread tastes most excellently, and this cow’s foot is so well cooked and seasoned that it invites one with its flavor.”

“Cow’s foot, did you say?”

“Yes, sir.”

“I tell you, it is the best morsel in the world, and there is no pheasant that tastes better to me.”

“Try it, sir, if that is the case, and see how you like it.”

I put into his hands the foot and two or three slices of bread, of the whitest. And he sat down near me and began to eat like one who is really hungry, cleaning up the bones better than a greyhound could have done it.

“This excellent dainty has been dressed with *almodrote*⁴⁵ sauce,” he said.

“You have a better sauce than that yourself,” I answered in a low voice.

“By the Lord, I have enjoyed it as if I hadn’t had a bite today.”

“Which is perfectly true,” I said to myself.

He asked me for the jug of water and I gave it to him just as I had brought it from the river, a clear sign, since it still had all the water, that my master

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had not had over much to eat. We drank and we went to bed, as on the previous night, very happy.

To avoid prolixity, I will say that we spent eight or ten days in that fashion. My sinful master went out in the morning to take the air through the streets of the city, very happy and pompous, while poor Lazarus had to provide for his sustenance.

I pondered over my misfortunes many a time, wondering why in leaving the mean masters I had had and trying to better myself I should bump into one who not only could not support me, but I had to support him. Still, I liked him well because I saw that he had nothing and could not help me at all. And I was rather sorry for him than angry at him. And many a time, in order that I could bring something home for his supper, I had to do without it.

One morning, the poor man got up in his shirt and went upstairs to do certain jobs, and as I wanted to be perfectly clear as to his financial condition, I unfolded the doublet and breeches he had left at the head of the bed and I found a velvet purse with a thousand creases in it but devil a sign of a *blanca* or of its having contained one in long time.

“This master,” I said to myself, “is poor, and no one can give that which he hasn’t; but the miserly

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blind man and the miserable mean clergyman, though the Lord gave freely to them — to the one through kissing hands and to the other because of a glib tongue — starved me to death. It is just that I should dislike them and have pity on him.”

The Lord knows that today, when I meet with a man of his dress, bearing and pomp, I have pity on him, thinking that perhaps he has to endure what he had to suffer. And I would be happier to serve such a man, with all his poverty, than the others, for the reasons I have stated. Only one fault did I have to find with my master. I wish he had not given himself such airs and that his arrogance should have decreased in the same measure as his poverty increased. But it seems to me that it is a rule, well kept and followed among them, that even if they have not a copper, they should wear a fine bonnet. May the Lord mend their ways, otherwise they will go to their graves with their arrogance.

Such was the state of affairs, and I was spending my life as I have said, when my ill luck, which never tired of persecuting me, willed that I should not remain in that wretched and shameful abode. And it happened that as the crops had been very meagre that year, the City Council decided that all beggars

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strangers to the city should leave it, and the public crier announced that those who were found thenceforth would be punished with the whip. And at the end of four days, which was the time set by the crier, I saw a string of beggars who were being whipped along the streets in compliance with the law. Which sight so filled me with terror that I dared not break the law by begging for alms.

And here one could have seen the abstinence that reigned in the house and the sadness and silence of its dwellers; so much so, that for two or three days at a stretch we did not have a bite or spoke a word. I managed to live through the kindness of some women cotton spinners who made bonnets and lived next to us and with whom I became acquainted and friendly. For, from the pittance they obtained, they gave me a little bit with which I managed to pull along.

I was not so sorry for myself as for my unfortunate master, who did not have a single bite in eight days. At any rate, we had nothing to eat in the house during that time. I could not tell where he went or how and what he ate. And fancy him coming down the street at noontime, his body erect and his waist as slender as a thoroughbred greyhound! And to safe-

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guard his dignity, he took up a straw, which were not very plentiful in the house, and went to the door picking his teeth with it, though they had nothing to pick, still complaining of the wretched house, saying:

“It is easily seen that this wretched abode is the cause of our troubles. It is gloomy, sad and dark, as you can see. So long as we remain here, we are bound to suffer. I wish the end of the month were here, so that we could leave it.”

While I was thus suffering hunger and persecution, I do not know through what stroke of luck or fortune, a *real*⁴⁶ fell into my poor master's power. And he came home with it as proud as if he had the whole of Venice's treasure, and with a joyful and smiling gesture, he gave it to me, saying:

“Here, Lazarus, take this, for God is opening up His hand. Go to the market and buy bread, wine and meat. Let's give the devil a black eye! And let me tell you, besides, so as to make you happy, that I have rented another house and that we don't need to stay in this wretched place beyond the end of the month. Cursed be this house and the man who laid the first tile on it, for evil followed me when I came into it! By our Lord, all the time I have lived

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in it, not a drop of wine, nor a bite of meat, nor any rest have I had. But, no wonder! the damned place is so dreary and sad looking! Go and come back as quick as you can, and let us eat today like real counts."

I took my *real* and the jar and hurrying along, I went up the street towards the market, joyful and happy. But what avails if it is written that my strokes of good luck are to be closely followed by the lashes of ill-fortune? And so, it happened that as I was going up the street figuring how I could spend the money to the greatest advantage and thanking God a thousand times for having given my master money, I had an untimely meeting with a dead man who was being brought down the street shoulder high by a host of clergymen and people.

I stood up against the wall to let them pass, and after the corpse went by, there came close to the bed in which it was carried a woman who must have been the widow, dressed up in mourning and surrounded by several women. And she was crying and shouting:

"My lord and husband, where are they taking you? To the sad unfortunate house, to the dreary dark house, to the house where people don't eat or drink!"

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When I heard this, I felt as if the heavens had collapsed, and I said:

“Woe is me! They are taking this corpse to my house.”

I turned back, rushed through the crowd and ran down the street towards the house as fast as my legs could carry me. And as soon as I entered I banged the door shut in a hurry, calling on my master to help and protect me, and clapping my arms around his body, I begged him to come and defend the door. Thinking that it might be something else, and somewhat upset, my master said to me:

“What’s the matter, lad? Why are you shouting like that? What’s wrong with you? Why have you shut the door in such a hurry?”

“Oh sir!” I said, “come quick; they are bringing a dead man in here!”

“How is that?” he asked.

“I met him up the street, and his widow was shouting: ‘My lord and husband, where are they taking you? To the dreary dark house, to the sad unfortunate house, to the house where people don’t eat or drink!’”

And, really, though my master had no reason to smile, he laughed so heartily that for a long time he

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could not speak at all. Meanwhile, I bolted the door and put my shoulder to it in order the better to protect it. The people went by with the corpse and still I was afraid they would bring the dead man into the house. And when my good master tired himself with laughing, though not with eating, he said to me:

“ True enough, Lazarus, according to what the widow is saying, you were right in thinking what you thought. But since the Lord has been kind enough to arrange things differently and they have gone by, open the door, open it by all means, and go and bring something to eat.”

“ Wait, sir, until they have left the street,” I said to him.

At last my master came to the door and opened it after pushing me aside, otherwise I would have prevented him, for such was the fear and terror that had seized me, and he set me on my way once more. But although we ate well that day, devil any pleasure did I have in eating. Nor did I regain my natural color in three days. And my master smiled whenever he remembered my fright.

In this fashion I lived with my third and poor master, the squire, several days, and all the time I longed to know why he had come and stayed in the

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city. For, from the first day I entered his service I knew he was a stranger, judging by the small number of people with whom he was acquainted or had any dealings.

At last my wish was fulfilled and I found out what I wanted to know. For, one day that we had dined fairly decently and he was feeling happy, he told me his history and mentioned that he had left his country simply because he did not want to take his hat off to a gentleman neighbor of his.

“But, sir,” I said, “if he was the person you tell me he was, and if he had more property than you, weren’t you wrong in not taking off your hat first, seeing, as you say, that he used to take his hat off to you?”

“He is all I have told you and he is worth a lot and he used to take his hat off to me; but, in all the times that we saluted each other and I took my hat off first, it would not have been a bad thing if once in a while he had beaten me at it.”

“It seems to me, sir,” I said, “that I would not be so fussy in those matters, especially with my elders and with those who were worth more than myself.”

“You are but a lad,” he answered me, “and you don’t feel so keenly about your dignity, which nowa-

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days is the only treasure men of honor have. Let me remind you, then, that I am, as you can see, a squire; but, by the Lord! should I meet a count in the street, and should he not take off his bonnet to me, and take it off very properly, the next time I see him coming, I will know full well how to go into a house, pretending I have business in it, or I'll turn into a side street, if there be one, before he meets me, so that I won't have to take my hat off to him. For a gentleman owes nothing to any one, save God and the king, and it isn't fair, if he be a man of honor, that he should neglect anything that touches the dignity of his person.

"I remember that one day I insulted an artisan in my country and that I wanted to strike him because every time I met him he used to say: 'May the Lord keep Your Worship.' I said to him: 'You, sir yokel, why are you so ill-mannered? You say to me: "May the Lord keep you," as if I were some Tom, Dick or Harry.' Thenceforth, wherever I met him, he took off his bonnet and spoke to me very properly."

"Why? Isn't it good manners when you salute another man to tell him that you wish the Lord may keep him?"

"Look at the foolish boy!" he said. "People say

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that to persons of no account, but to those in social position, like myself, the least they ought to say is: 'I kiss Your Worship's hands' or at the very least: 'I kiss your hands, sir,' if he who speaks be a gentleman. And so, I could not stand that man in my country, and I would not and will not stand any man, below the king, who says to me 'May the Lord keep you'."

"Sinner that I am," I said to myself, "that is why He neglects you so much, because you won't allow people to beg Him to keep you."

"Especially," he said, "as I am not so very poor either, for in my country I own several houses, which if they were standing and in good repair, and if they were located sixteen leagues from where I was born, in the Costanilla of Valladolid,⁴⁷ they would be worth more than two hundred times one thousand *maravedis*, so large and fine they could be. And I have a dovecot which, were it not wrecked, as it is, would yield more than two hundred pigeons each year. And many other things that I don't mention and which I abandoned for the sake of my dignity. And I came to this city thinking that I might find a good situation, but things have not turned out as I thought. I have found here many canons and ecclesiastics, but they

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are such dull people that the whole world will not make them change their ways. Several gentlemen of moderate means have begged me to serve them, but it would be too much work. For from being a man, one has to become a tool, and if you don't submit, they tell you: 'God be with you.' And most of the time your salary is long in reaching you, and the surest payment you get for your services is your food. And when their consciences trouble them and they want to recompense you for your services, they pay you out of their wardrobe, giving you a sweaty doublet or a threadbare coat or cloak. Even when a man has to serve a titled nobleman he has to endure a good many things. Isn't there in me enough ability to serve and satisfy a titled nobleman? By God, if I met one, I think I could be his secretary and I would render him many services, for I could lie to him as well as any other, and I would please him beyond comparison. I would laugh at his witticisms and habits, even if they were not the best in the world. I would never tell him anything that might hurt his feelings, even if it were for his own good. I would be very diligent about his person, in deeds as well as in words. I would never kill myself to do things that he was not to see at all. I would scold the servants

THIRD TREATISE

where he could hear me, so that he might think that I was deeply interested in his affairs. And if he happened to be scolding one of them himself, I would drop in a word or two, seemingly in favor of the culprit, in order to fire his wrath. I would praise everything he liked and, on the contrary, I would mock, slander and defame the people of the household and the strangers alike and I would try to find out other people's affairs and tell them to him, and many other things after the same fashion, which nowadays are in vogue at the court and much relished by the gentry thereof. For they don't want to see honest men in their households, rather do they hate them and think little of them and they call them stupid and tell them that they are not reliable men on whom a master can depend. And crafty men act with such masters nowadays as I would act myself; but my bad luck keeps me from meeting one of them."

In this fashion my master lamented his adverse fortune, giving me an account of his valorous person.

And as we were thus talking, a man and an old woman came through the doorway. The man demanded the rent of the house and the old woman that of the bed. They made up their accounts and the sum amounted for two months to more than he

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received in a whole year. I think it was twelve or thirteen *reals*. And he gave them a very good answer: that he would go out to exchange a piece of two⁴⁸ and that they should return in the afternoon. But he went out and never came back.

So that when they came in the afternoon, it was too late. I told them that he had not returned yet. Night came and he did not; I felt afraid of staying alone in the house and I went to see the neighbor women, told them what had happened and I slept in their house.

When morning came, the creditors returned and obtaining no answer, knocked at the door of the house where I was. The women answered:

“Here are his servant and the key of the door.”

They asked me about him and I told them that I did not know where he was and that he had not returned since he went out to change the coin and that I was thinking that he had abandoned them and myself and had gone away leaving us in the lurch.

When they heard that, they went to fetch a sheriff and a notary. And back they come with them and they take the key and they call me and send for witnesses and they open the door and enter the house to seize my master's property until such time

THIRD TREATISE

as the debt should be cancelled. They went all over the house and they found it unencumbered, as I have mentioned, and they said to me:

“What has become of your master’s effects, his coffers, tapestries and furniture?”

“I don’t know anything about that,” I replied.

“No doubt,” they said, “they were taken out of the house last night and were carried elsewhere. Sir sheriff, arrest this lad, for he knows where the things are.”

The sheriff came up to me, and grabbing me by my coat collar, he said:

“Boy, you are arrested if you don’t declare where your master’s property is.”

As I had never found myself in such a predicament (for though I had been seized by the neck a thousand times, it was gently and so that I could show the road to him who could not see) I was greatly afraid, and with tears in my eyes I promised to answer all their questions.

“All right,” they said. “Tell us all you know and don’t be frightened.”

The notary sat down on a stone bench to make the inventory, asking me what my master owned.

“Sirs,” said I, “what my master owns, according

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to what he told me, is a very fine lot of land for building houses and a tumbled-down dovecot."

"Very well," they said. "No matter how little that may be worth, it will cover his debt. And whereabouts in the city is that property?" they asked me.

"In his country," I answered.

"By God, that's a fine business," they said. "And where is his country?"

"He told me that he came from Old Castile,"⁴⁹ I said.

The policeman and the notary laughed heartily, saying:

"This story is good enough to repay you for your debt, even if it were larger."

The neighbor women, who were present, said:

"Sirs, this boy is innocent. He has been with that squire but a few days and doesn't know any more about him than your worships do. The little sinner has been coming to our house and we give him to eat whatever we can, for the Lord's sake, and at night he used to go and sleep with him."

My innocence having been established, they set me free and let me go. And the sheriff and the notary demanded their fee from the man and the woman. And they had a great ado and racket about

THIRD TREATISE

it. For they argued that they were not obliged to pay, as there was no property to be seized. The other two, on the other hand, claimed that they had neglected a more important business to attend to theirs.

Finally, after a good deal of shouting, a policeman seized the old woman's blanket, which was not much of a load. The five of them went away still shouting. I do not know how the affair ended. I suppose that the sinful blanket defrayed the expenses. And it were well that it should be so, for it would rest from its former hardships, as the old woman used to hire it.

Just as I have stated it, my poor third master left me, whereby I realized how unfortunate I was. For my luck was so hard against me that everything turned out upside down, for, as a rule, the masters dismiss their servants, but it did not happen in that wise with me. On the contrary, it was my master who left me and ran away from me.

FOURTH TREATISE

HOW LAZARUS HIRED HIMSELF TO A MONK OF THE MERCED,⁵⁰ AND WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM WHILE IN HIS SERVICE

I HAD to look for a fourth master, and he was a monk of the Merced to whom I was directed by the women I have mentioned. They said he was a relative of theirs. He hated the choir and disliked eating in the convent; he was over fond of being out of doors and extremely fond of lay affairs and of visiting. So much so, that I think he wore out more shoes than the rest of the convent put together. He gave me the first pair of shoes I ever wore in my life; but they did not last me more than eight days. Nor could I follow him around in his excursions any longer. And for this and other matters, on which I shall remain silent, I left him.

FIFTH TREATISE

HOW LAZARUS HIRED HIMSELF TO A *Buldero*⁵¹ AND THE THINGS HE HAD TO ENDURE WITH HIM

My luck gave me my fifth master, who was a *buldero*, the most impudent, the most shameless and the greatest seller of bulls I ever saw, hope to see, or anybody ever saw. For he had studied ways and fashions and very subtle inventions.

When we arrived at a town where he was to preach the bull, he first presented the clergymen or priests with a few trifles, of very little value or substance, such as a Murcian lettuce,⁵² and if they were in season, a couple of limes or oranges, two or three peaches, a couple of pears. Thus he tried to ingratiate himself with the priests, so that the latter would favor his business and summon their parishioners to take the bull.

When they thanked him, he tried to find out how learned they were. If they said they knew Latin, he did not speak a word in that language for fear of making a blunder; instead, he used polished and

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well rounded phrases with a glib tongue. And if he knew that the said clergymen were reverends, I mean that they had been ordained through the influence of money and with *cartas reverendas*,⁵³ rather than because of their learning, he made himself out another Saint Thomas to them and spoke a couple of hours in Latin. And he played the part very well, though he was far from being what he pretended.

When fair means failed him in his attempt to sell the bulls, he tried foul ones. And in order to attain his ends, he caused the people a lot of trouble, and sometimes he tried on them some clever tricks. And as it would be rather long to relate all those I saw him perform, I will tell a very subtle and witty one with which I shall prove his smartness.

In a town of Sagra de Toledo,⁵⁴ he had preached two or three days, taking his accustomed steps, and nobody had bought a bull, nor as far as I could see, did any one have any intention of doing so. He was given to all the devils and wondering what to do when he invited the people to give a send-off to the bull the following morning.

And that very night, after supper, he and the sheriff started to gamble as to who should pay for the dessert. They quarrelled over it and a few

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insults were exchanged. He called the sheriff a thief, and the sheriff called him a faker. At this, the commissary, my master, seized a lance that happened to be where they were gambling. The sheriff put his hand to his sword, which was hanging from his belt.

At the shouts and noise that we all raised, the guests and neighbors rushed in and separated them. The two men, very angry, tried to free themselves from those who were holding them, so as to kill each other. But as the people who came at the noise grew in numbers and the house was full, seeing that they could not get at each other with their weapons, they addressed each other insulting remarks. Among them, the sheriff told my master that he was a forger and that the bull he was preaching was forged.

Finally, the people of the town, finding that they could not quiet them down, decided to carry the sheriff away from the inn. My master remained there very angry. And as the guests and neighbors begged him to calm down and go to sleep, he went to bed and so did the rest of us.

Next morning, my master went to church and ordered the bells to be tolled for Mass and for the sermon to send off the bull. And the people gathered,

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and they were murmuring against the bulls, saying that they were forged and that the sheriff himself had uncovered the fraud in a quarrel. So that, besides their disinclination to buy them, they ended by hating them.

The commissary mounted the pulpit and began his sermon, exhorting them not to deprive themselves of the benefits and indulgences that the holy bull would bring them.

He was in the best of the sermon when the sheriff came in through one of the doors of the church, and as soon as he had prayed, he stood up, and in a loud slow voice, he sensibly began to say:

“My good men, listen to a word from me, and then you may listen to whomsoever you choose. I came here with this faker who is preaching to you. He deceived me and asked me to help him in this business, and told me that we would divide the earnings. But now, seeing the evil that such a thing would work upon my conscience and upon your pockets, repenting of what has been done, I openly declare to you that the bulls he is preaching are false, and that you should not believe in them or buy them, and that I am not, directly or indirectly, a party to their sale and that I now give up my wand of office and throw

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it on the floor. And if this man should at any time be punished for his trickery, I beg you to bear witness that I am not with him or giving him any assistance; rather am I undeceiving you and exposing his dishonesty."

And he ended his speech. Some honest men that were present, wanted to get up and throw the sheriff out of the church, so as to avoid scandal. But my master prevented them and ordered every one not to molest him under pain of excommunication; but that they should let him say whatever he pleased. And so he also remained silent while the sheriff said all I have mentioned.

When he had finished talking, my master told him if he had anything else to say, to say it.

The sheriff said:

"There is a lot more to be said about you and your dishonesty; but what I have said is enough just now."

The commissary knelt down in the pulpit, and joining his hands and looking up to heaven, he said:

"Lord God, to whom no thing is hidden, but everything is visible, and to whom no thing is impossible, rather possible: Thou knowest the truth and how unjustly I am being insulted. As far as I am con-

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cerned, I forgive him, so that Thou, oh Lord, mayest forgive me. Do not look at him, for he does not know what he is doing. But the injury done to Thee, I beg Thee for justice's sake, not to overlook it. For it might be that some one who may be here, perchance was thinking of buying this holy bull, and now, believing the false words of that man, may not do so. And because the injury thus done to his neighbor is so great, I beg Thee, oh Lord, not to overlook it, but rather work out a miracle here, and let it be in this fashion: if what that man says be true and I am bringing here evil and deception, let this pulpit and myself along with it sink into the ground a thousand fathoms, without it or I perishing at all; and if what I say be true, and he, persuaded by the devil and in order to withhold from those here present and deprive them of such great benefit, speaks evil, let him also be punished and let his falsity be exposed."

Hardly had my devout master finished his prayer, when the black sheriff took a fit and fell on the floor with such a fearful blow that it resounded in the whole church, and he began to yell and foam at the mouth, twisting it, making grimaces with his face, swinging his arms and legs and rolling on the floor from one place to another.

FIFTH TREATISE

The racket and the shouts of the people were such that they could not hear each other. Some were frightened and out of their wits.

Some said: "May the Lord help and assist him!"

Others: "Serve him right, for he is bearing false testimony."

Finally, some of those present, who, as far as I could see, were not a little afraid, held his arms, with which he was striking at those near him. Others seized him by the legs and held them tight, for there was no treacherous mule in the world that could kick as hard as he did. Thus they held him for a long time. More than fifteen men were on top of him, and he tried to strike at them all, and if they did not take care, he hit them in the mouth.

Meanwhile, my master was kneeling in the pulpit, his hands clasped together and his eyes turned towards heaven, so transported with divine essence that the tears and the shouts in the church could not distract him from his divine contemplation.

Some of those good men went up to him, and waking him up with shouts, they begged him to come and assist the poor man who was dying, and that he should forget the past and his evil words, for he had already paid for them, and that if he could do something to

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save him from the danger he was in and from the suffering he was enduring, for the love of God to do it, for they very clearly could see that the wretch was guilty and he was a good and truthful man, for the Lord had not delayed punishment, answering his petition for vengeance.

The commissary, as if waking up from a sweet dream, looked at them and at the culprit and at those who were around him, and he said very slowly:

“My good men, you should never pray for a man upon whom God has so signally expressed His will. But since He orders us not to return evil for evil, and to forgive the injuries done to us, we may confidently ask Him to accomplish what He commands us to do, and that His Majesty may forgive this man who offended Him by placing obstacles before His Holy Faith. Let us all pray to Him.”

And so, he came down from the pulpit and very piously asked them all to beg Our Lord to forgive that sinner and to return him to his health and sane mind and to expel from him the devil, if it were that His Majesty had allowed the evil one to enter his body for his great sin.

They all knelt down, and with the clergymen before the altar, they all began to sing a litany in a low

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voice. Then, my master came towards the man with a cross and some holy water, and after singing a little over him, raising his hands and eyes to heaven, so that you could only see a little of the whites, he began a prayer, as lengthy as it was pious, with which he made everybody cry, as happens during Passion sermons with a good preacher and a devout congregation, begging the Lord, for he did not want the sinner dead but rather alive and repentant, that the man deluded by the devil should be delivered from death and forgiven for his sin and restored to life and health, so that he could repent and confess his sins.

This done, he ordered the bull to be brought to him and placed it on the man's head. And then the sinful sheriff began to feel better and better and to come back to his senses. And when he was fully recovered, he threw himself down at the commissary's feet and begged his pardon and confessed that what had come out of his mouth was by order of the devil because he wanted to hurt him and revenge himself for the quarrel they had had and because, which was the main thing, the devil was greatly grieved by the benefit the people might receive through buying the bull.

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My master forgave him and they became friends again. And there was such a hurry in buying the bull that hardly a soul in town was left without it, husbands and wives, sons and daughters, boys and girls.

The news of what had happened spread over the neighboring towns and when we arrived in them there was no need of sermon or of going to church, for they came to the inn to get them, just as if they had been pears and were being given away for nothing. So that in ten or twelve towns we went to in that neighborhood, my master sold as many thousand bulls without preaching a sermon.

When he went through the performance, I confess my sin, I was scared by it, thinking that it was true, like many others; but when I saw afterwards the laughter and the fun that the sheriff and my master were making about the business, I found out how the whole thing had been engineered by my ingenious and inventive master. And although I was but a lad, it pleased me very much, and I said to myself:

“How many tricks like these are played by these rogues on the innocent people!”

Finally, I remained with this my fifth master almost four months, during which I also had to endure many hardships.

SIXTH TREATISE

HOW LAZARUS HIRED HIMSELF TO A CHAPLAIN, AND WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM WHILE IN HIS SERVICE

AFTER that, I hired myself to a painter of timbrels, to grind down his colors, and I suffered a thousand hardships.

As by that time I was quite a big lad, one day that I went into the principal church, one of the chaplains thereof engaged me as his servant. He put me in charge of a donkey, four earthenware jars and a whip, and I began to sell water in the city. This was the first rung I climbed to reach a decent living, for he gave me almost what I wanted. I used to give my master thirty *maravedis* every day out of the earnings, and the remainder, as well as all I earned on Saturdays was for myself.

I fared so well in this business that at the end of four years, which I spent at it, having put aside my earnings, I managed to save enough to dress myself very decently with second-hand clothes: Of which, I bought myself a doublet of old fustian, a threadbare

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coat with frilled sleeves, a cloak which had been of velvet and an old sword, one of the first made by Cuellar.⁵⁵ As soon as I found myself dressed like an honest man, I told my master to keep his donkey, for I did not want to continue in that business any longer.

SEVENTH TREATISE

HOW LAZARUS HIRED HIMSELF TO A SHERIFF, AND WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM

HAVING taken leave of the chaplain, I entered the legal profession, hiring myself to a sheriff. But I did not live very long with him, for it seemed to me a dangerous business, especially as one night some outlaws chased my master and myself with sticks and stones. They treated my master very roughly, I think, but they did not manage to catch me. With this, I broke my engagement.

And wondering in what kind of business I could settle down so as to live peacefully and save something for my old age, it pleased the Lord to enlighten me and to put me in the right road. And through the kindness of some gentlemen friends of mine, all my past hardships and suffering were fully repaid with the position I managed to obtain, which was a royal berth, for I could see that no one prospered unless he had one.

Which position I still hold to serve God and Your

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Worship. And all I have to do in it is to cry the wines that are sold in this city, and the sales and lost articles, and to accompany those who suffer persecution from justice, declaring in a loud voice their crimes; in other words: I am town crier.

I have got along so well, I have mastered the business so thoroughly, that everything related to my office passes through my hands. So much so, that those who want to sell wine or other things in the city, if Lazarus of Tormes does not take the business in hand, may as well make up their minds that they will obtain no profit.

At about this time, the archpriest of San Salvador,⁵⁶ my lord and Your Worship's servant and friend, having heard of my person, for I cried his wines, and finding that I was smart and led a decent life, wished to marry me to a servant of his. And seeing that from such a person nothing but good and preferment could come to me, I decided to please him. And so I married her and to this day I have not repented it.

For besides being a good, diligent and obliging woman, I obtain from my lord the archpriest all sorts of favors and protection. And every year he gives her a load of wheat, and at Easter some meat, and

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sometimes a couple of *bodigos* and the old breeches which he casts off. And he made us rent a house next to his own. On Sundays and holidays we eat in his house.

Evil tongues, which always have wagged and always will wag, will not give us peace, saying I don't know what about her making his bed and cooking his meals. And the Lord help them, for they are telling the truth.

But as my wife does not like that kind of talk, my master has promised me something which I think he will carry out. For he spoke to me one day in front of her for a long time, and he said to me:

“Lazarus of Tormes, whoever pays attention to the saying of evil tongues will never prosper. I am saying this because I would not be surprised if some one, seeing your wife come into my house and going out again. . . . She comes in for your honor and her own. I promise you that. So that, never mind what they may say, but attend to what interests you, I mean your own welfare.”

“Sir,” I said, “I'll take good care to keep in good terms with such people as Your Worship. It is true that some of my friends have mentioned something about it, and they have even assured me on three dif-

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ferent occasions that, before she married me, she had been delivered three times, begging Your Worship's pardon, for she is listening to us."

My wife then began to swear upon her soul, so that I thought the house was going to fall down on top of us. She then started to cry and to curse the person who had married us, in such a way that I wished I had died rather than have let such a thing out of my mouth. But, myself on one side and my lord on the other, we coaxed her so much and we told her so many things that she stopped crying after I had sworn that I would never mention the matter to her again and that I was pleased and thought proper that she should go in and come out, at night or during the day, for I was very sure of her honesty. And so the three of us remained very happy.

And to this day, nobody has heard us mention the matter. On the contrary, when I hear some one trying to broach the subject, I cut him short and I say to him:

"Look here: If you are a friend, do not mention a thing that will displease me, for I don't hold as a friend a person who will cause me sorrows. Especially if you want to make me quarrel with my wife, for I love her better than anything else in the world,

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better even than my own person. And God has granted me many favors through her that I did not deserve. For I will swear upon the Holy Host that she is as honest a woman as any within the gates of Toledo. And if any man should speak to the contrary, I'll fight him to the death."

In this way, they never say anything to me, and I enjoy peace in my own home.

This happened the same year that our victorious emperor came to this famous city of Toledo and held Cortes⁵⁷ here, and there were great festivals, as Your Worship must have heard.

At that time I was very prosperous, and at the summit of my good luck.

THE END

NOTES TO LAZARILLO OF TORMES

¹ *Lazarillo* is the diminutive of *Lázaro*=Lazarus. As in most cases of Spanish diminutives, it is impossible to adequately translate it into English, for a Spanish diminutive conveys considerably more than an idea of size.

² "Dicere solebat Plinius senior nullum esse librum tam malum, ut non aliqua parte prodesset." Pliny the Younger, Ep. 5, lib. 3.

³ "Honos alit artes, omnesque incenduntur ad studia gloria." M. Tullius Cicero, Tuscul. 1, 2.

⁴ An affluent of the river Duero, or Douro. It flows by the city of Salamanca, where it is spanned by a well-preserved Roman bridge.

⁵ A village situated a short distance up the river from the Roman bridge already mentioned.

⁶ One of the three provinces which formed the old kingdom of Leon. Its capital is the city of Salamanca, seat of a once famous university.

⁷ "And he confessed and denied not . . ." John I, 20.

⁸ "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. V, 10.

⁹ *Comendador* was a knight who had an *encomienda*, or revenue, consisting of tenths and first fruits. This particular *comendador* held the *encomienda* of the parish of the Magdalene, in Salamanca, which belonged to the Knights of Alcántara, one of the four Spanish Military Orders still in existence.

¹⁰ *Coco* is a fantastic creation, an evil spirit with which stupid mothers of unmanageable children strike terror into

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their recalcitrant offsprings' hearts, telling them that if they do not do as they are told, the *Coco* will take them away.

¹¹ Lest this poor colored man might be thought ungentelemanly, it were well to remind the reader that such a phrase was not meant as a reflection on the honesty of the boy's mother. Far from it; it was meant as a compliment to the boy. As there were no Puritans in existence at that time, the phrase did not shock any one, and it was in very common use during that period. To this day, the *gauchos* use the same phrase as a compliment.

¹² Name of a Moor about whom many *romances*, or ballads, have been written. *Zayde*, in Arabic, means lord or master.

¹³ A common penalty applied by a most rabidly Christian society — such as the Spain of the sixteenth century — for the infringement of the laws elaborately and uncharitably devised against courtesans, who, after all, received all possible encouragement even from gentlemen of the cloth.

¹⁴ This inn, according to Julio Cejador, was located near the river.

¹⁵ *Gelves* is an island off the Barbary coast. The Spaniards were disastrously defeated thereon in 1510 by the Moors. In this battle died the father of the Duke of Alva, who gained such notoriety in the Netherlands a few years after.

¹⁶ An allusion to the miracle by St. Peter. "Silver and gold have I none . . ." Acts III, 6.

¹⁷ Famous Greek physician of the second century.

¹⁸ A coin of very small value.

¹⁹ A coin worth about one twenty-sixth of an American cent.

²⁰ The province of Toledo is one of the five that make up New Castile.

²¹ A town in the province of Toledo.

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²² A town in the province of Toledo.

²³ A town in the province of Toledo.

²⁴ A town in the province of Toledo.

²⁵ Alexander the Great, of Macedonia, was held as the prototype of generosity.

²⁶ A loaf of bread which the faithful offer in the Catholic Church for the sake of their dead and is for the particular use of the priests. According to Cavarrubias, *bodigo* comes from *boda*, a wedding (Gothic, *vidan*; Anglo-Saxon, *wedian*), because similar loaves were used at such ceremonies. Julio Cejador says that *bodigo* is derived from *votivum*, because it is an offering.

²⁷ In the Middle Ages, oriental preserves and sweets came into the Peninsula through the city of Valencia, capital of the old kingdom of the same name, situated but a few miles from the Mediterranean, on the river Turia. Even today, Valencia is famed for its candies and sweetmeats.

²⁸ The custom of eating sheeps' heads on Saturdays "in that part of the country" was a sort of compromise from the vow not to eat meat on Saturdays throughout Spain, made when the festivity of the Triumph of the Holy Cross was instituted to celebrate the victory of Las Navas on the fourteenth of July, 1212. At the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, in the province of Jaen, the united armies of the Christian kings of the Peninsula—save those of Leon and Portugal—thoroughly defeated the Almohides, led by Mahommed el Nazar.

²⁹ This seems to be a slip on the part of the author, for Lazarillo has not mentioned any wine before, nor does he mention any afterwards in this "treatise." It is fair to assume that had there been some wine in the chest, Lazarillo would at least have moistened his lips with it.

³⁰ *Saludador* in the original, from *salud*=health. The *saludadores* are quacks who specialize in hydrophobia. They are supposed to have been born on Good Friday and

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to have a cross on their palates. This cross they never show to any one, for they claim that by so doing they would lose their supernatural powers. The *modus operandi* varies in the different parts of the Peninsula. In some parts of Old Castile, they cure persons and animals by breathing on them at the same time that they move their head up and down and from side to side, so that their breath forms the figure of a cross. It is not clear why Lazarillo should say that they drink a lot, except perhaps because they are frequently invited to do so by the grateful relatives and masters of persons and animals they cure.

³¹ Bread is still considered in Spain as the face or the body of God. A loaf of bread is never laid down on its side or bottom up, and when a piece of bread is inadvertently allowed to fall on the floor, it is reverently kissed on its being picked up.

³² The time taken to say a certain prayer was a convenient measure when clocks and watches were far from plentiful. Even today, many Spanish housewives measure time by saying prayers, and they can turn out an excellent soft-boiled egg in the time they take to say an "Ave Maria." An admirable system of looking after soul and body at the same time!

³³ Tertian is an intermittent ague that affects the patient every third day. Lazarillo simply makes a play upon the words *terciana*=tertian, and *tercero*=third.

³⁴ Lazarillo invokes St. John because he is the patron saint of servants. At that time masters hired new servants on St. John's day.

³⁵ An allusion to the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

³⁶ Lazarillo means, of course, that he had nothing to worry him . . . save his hunger. His reference to the King of France is due to the fact that many blind men who owned a dog, taught it to jump through a hoop—to earn some coppers from admiring spectators—saying: "Jump

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for the king of France." Naturally, the king of France was a nuisance to the poor dog.

³⁷ Penelope, in order to rid herself of more than a hundred lovers who importuned her during her husband Ulysses' absence, told them that she would not accept any of them until she had finished a piece of cloth she had on hand, and she pulled apart at night what she had woven during the day.

³⁸ A reference to Jonah, by which Lazarillo means that he was unconscious during those three days. Probably the author wants to convey the idea that poor Jonah himself did not know where he was during the time he is supposed to have spent inside the whale.

³⁹ An allusion to Astraea, or Justice, who, according to Virgil and other poets, disgusted at mankind, left the earth and went to heaven. It is fair to assume that if the goddess is as sensitive as in days of yore, she will be up there yet. "Et Virgo caede madentes ultima coelestium terras Astraea reliquit." Ovid, *Metam.* I, 149.

⁴⁰ A famous swordmaker who fashioned the sword said to have belonged to Isabella the Catholic.

⁴¹ It is not very clear who this Count of Arcos was. The first Count of Arcos de la Frontera was Don Pedro Ponce de León. Don Juan II gave him that title in exchange for that of Count of Medellin, which the king had previously granted to him. The second Count was Don Juan Ponce de León, but the third Count, Don Rodrigo Ponce de León, who distinguished himself in the war against Granada, became Marquis and Duke of Cadiz.

There was no Count of Arcos when Lazarillo is supposed to have lived. Julio Cejador thinks that there is a mistake here and that the Count should be Claros de Montalván, about whom there is a *romance* where the Count asks his valet to hand him over his clothes to dress himself. The Count certainly knew how to dress; among other

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trifles, he wore a chain around his neck with no less than three hundred precious stones in it!

⁴² Macias is famous in Spanish literature, not because of the few verses bearing his name which have reached us, but because of his devotion to the lady of his desire. He is known as *el Enamorado*, or *o Namorado*, the Lovesick, and is held as a paragon of lovers. Attached to the household of the nobleman Don Enrique de Villena, he fell desperately in love with a lady of the same household. On one occasion, when Macias was away, Villena made the lady marry an *Hidalgo* of Porcuna. Naturally, Macias' passion was intensified by the obstacle placed before it. The Lovesick continued to communicate with the lady, to the annoyance of the *Hidalgo*, who complained to his master Villena. After several fruitless reprimands, Don Enrique finally put Macias in jail at Arjonilla, in the province of Jaen. But irons could not confine Macias' ardent love. He continued to write poems to his lady love until the enraged *Hidalgo* managed to put an end to Macias' and his own sufferings by killing the unfortunate poet with a lance through the bars of the prison.

⁴³ Ovid, the Latin poet contemporary of Jesus Christ. Especially in his "*Ars Amatoria*."

⁴⁴ The reader can guess what payment the ladies would give the squire for their breakfast.

⁴⁵ A sauce consisting mainly of oil, garlic and cheese, and chiefly used for seasoning egg-plants.

⁴⁶ A coin worth about three American cents.

⁴⁷ A steep street in Valladolid.

⁴⁸ A piece worth sixty-eight *maravedis*.

⁴⁹ One of the original Christian kingdoms of Spain. Toledo, where the action takes place, is in New Castile.

⁵⁰ A military religious order founded by Jaime the Conqueror, King of Aragon, in the thirteenth century, for the purpose of rescuing captives from the infidels.

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⁵¹ More correctly, *bulero*, a sellers of papal bulls.

⁵² A variety of the lettuce that came from the old Moorish kingdom of Murcia, in Spain.

⁵³ Letters by which a bishop or prelate authorized one of his subjects to be admitted into the priesthood. They were called *reverendas* because they began with the words: "*Reverendo en Cristo Padre . . .*"

⁵⁴ A district of the province of Toledo. The name probably comes from some pagan religious sacrifices having been performed there.

⁵⁵ Probably some swordmaker famous in those days.

⁵⁶ A parish in Toledo.

⁵⁷ *Cortes* is the name given to the Spanish parliament. Cortes were held in Toledo in 1525 and in 1538, and Julio Cejador is of the opinion that the latter are referred to by Lazarillo. There is no reason for that assumption, except that Sebastian de Horozco, whom Cejador thinks is the author of Lazarillo, wrote a memoir of the 1538 Cortes. But perhaps Lazarillo meant the earlier Cortes. He was by that time well over twenty years of age, and all the events he relates might easily have happened to him by that date.

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